

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXII, Issue No. 48

MONDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2012

www.saipantribune.com 50¢



POLL RESULTS

Do you support the creation of a Criminal Offender Registry that will track convicted felons in the CNMI?

Yes **132**

No **19**

No opinion **7**

Sunday, February 26, 2012

INSIDE

BUSINESS



President Obama says there is no easy answer to the problem of rising gas prices. **► PAGE 13**

ASIA



Pakistan is demolishing the compound where Osama bin Laden was killed. **► PAGE 15**

LIFE & STYLE



The Academy Awards are a big deal—even to A-listers. **► PAGE 20**

2-pct. tax cut extension now law

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

President Barack Obama signed into law a compromise bill extending a 2-percent cut in federal tax through December 2012, a welcome relief among CNMI workers dealing with work hour cuts because of a slow economy, gas prices now matching the hourly minimum wage, utility costs that are still high, and all others that make the cost of living on the islands high.

The new law extends a cut in the Social Security tax rate—from 6.2 to 4.2 percent—for another 10 months.

The 2-percentage point tax cut was supposed to expire this month, but the

U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed a bill two Fridays ago to extend it. Obama signed it into law five

See TAX CUT on Page 4

Wilshire: 10-year investment horizon urgent to save Fund

» **'Stock market not a safe place for the plan's limited portfolio'**

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Without any positive changes to the Retirement Fund's portfolio, the only way to save the Fund from collapsing in 2014 will be the creation of a 10-year investment horizon for the Commonwealth's pension program, according to a Wilshire Consulting Associates official Friday.

In a blunt presentation to the board, Wilshire principal Maggie Ralbovsky said that, as the Fund's investment consultant, she has no silver bullet that will immediately solve the financial mess of the pension agency.

With the present value of the Fund's portfolio, she said there's no way it can

See WILSHIRE on Page 4

RELATED NEWS

► **Fund approves hiring of 3 money managers, return to to Glidepath. PAGE 2**

Japan police bust alleged investment scam

» **Former Anaks Housing Complex board president, 16 others arrested**

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
fergie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Japan police arrested last week 17 persons, including the former president of Anaks Ocean View Hill Saipan, for allegedly victimizing old folks in Japan by enticing them to invest in a fraudulent sea cucumber project.

Saipan Tribune learned that former Anaks official Masaji Nakamoto claimed to be president of a company named Nanyo that has its head office on Saipan. Nanyo's website <http://nanyo-co.com/>, showed a letter from Gov. Benigno R. Fitial dated Dec. 27, 2011; the letter was written in Japanese.

In the letter, Fitial apparently thanked Nakamoto for meeting and inviting him, and stating that his (Nakamoto's) business proposal sounds good. Sources said it's not clear whether

See JAPAN on Page 4



CLARISSA V. DAVID

END OF THE RAINBOW

A man and his son enjoy the view at the Susupe Beach Park following a light rainfall and with a rainbow as a backdrop on Saturday morning. Hundreds of walkers gathered at the park for some refreshments and live music after taking part in the 4th Annual "Walk to Remember" in honor of Tan Holdings executive John "JP" Pangelinan who died in Feb. 2008 after a long and brave battle with cancer.

USDA asked to restore \$4.5M for food stamps, not EBT

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP), as well as the Fitial administration, asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to restore \$4.5 million in de-obli-

gated funding to the CNMI but this time for actual food assistance to thousands of food stamp recipients, not for the electronic benefit transfer system that the Commonwealth has been unable to put in place for years.

The \$4.5 million was awarded to the

CNMI's Nutrition Assistance Program from fiscal years 2006 to 2010 but has been de-obligated because the funds were not being used for its intended purpose, which is for an EBT.

Sablan wrote a Feb. 23 letter to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, ask-

ing that the \$4.5 million be restored with the condition that the CNMI must use the money only for food benefits, and not for administrative costs.

"Whatever the reason that led to the de-obligation, let us not penalize those

See USDA on Page 4

80 work hours for federally funded programs under review. PAGE 2
Syed to push 'green card' anew for all legal foreign workers. PAGE 5

Local

80 work hours for federally funded programs now under review

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos said the administration is now considering the restoration of 80 work hours instead of 64 hours biweekly for all federally funded programs and agencies—a development that some lawmakers said yesterday is “welcome news” and should also extend to offices funded by the CNMI government later on.

Inos said a final decision could be made within the next 30 days or so.

“We’re looking at ways to restore hours for everybody,

primarily for federally funded programs,” Inos said in an interview.

This comes after Gov. Benigno R. Fitial lifted the austerity measures for the Nutrition Assistance Program, which administers the federally funded food stamp program. The exemption from the 16-hour cut is mainly for NAP to work on a backlog of eligibility review for some 900 food stamp beneficiaries.

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) and other lawmakers said the fiscal year 2012 budget law exempts federally funded offices from the 16-hour work cut anyway.

“I hope that we are able to maximize the funds granted and not have them expire as if to show that we don’t need them,” he told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

NAP, for example, had a backlog in its workload as a result of the austerity Fridays.

The \$102 million budget for fiscal year 2012, however, is premised on 64-hour work biweekly for locally funded agencies, except for the Legislature. Inos said restoring 80 hours for everyone would immediately result in a budget deficit.

Inos, who oversees government finances, said there’s no

question that there are readily available federal funds to open certain programs and offices for 80 hours every two weeks, but he said the administration is still concerned about fairness and equality as locally funded offices will remain under 64 hours.

“We’re trying to see how we can address the issue of parity, meaning if we do this for federal grants, what will be the effect on employees funded by local [funds]. That’s one of the governor’s concerns, about morale issues so we need to take a look at that,” Inos added.

Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota) said she’s always been

in support of restoring 80 work hours for federally funded positions, along with two locally funded agencies: the Division of Customs Services and the Division of Quarantine.

Santos also introduced a resolution that the House eventually adopted, asking Fitial to exempt these federally funded agencies from the work hour cuts.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) said that if the federal government budgeted for a certain program in the CNMI, then that program should not be subject to austerity.

“As for the other offices, we need to work on improving collections and reduce unnecessary government hiring,” Yumul said.

He pointed out that when most federal grants are written, whether competitive or formula, “all aspects of how it is to be spent is in detail to include staffing, equipment, supplies, and especially salaries.”

Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-

Saipan) said the purchasing power of these federally funded employees “will aid our local economy.”

“Not only that, but will assist these individuals in their everyday family living such as buying food and paying their utility bills, amongst others,” he added.

Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta and other federal agencies have asked the CNMI government to exempt federally funded programs from the austerity measures. Interior, for example, funds the Coral Reef Restoration Program under local environmental agencies, as well as the Brown Tree Snake Program under the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

So far, only NAP has been exempted among federally funded programs. Inos said the administration does not want NAP to revert to 64 hours after the 60-day austerity exemption is lifted to prevent any more backlogs.

Fund approves hiring of 3 money managers, return to to Glidepath

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund’s board of trustees approved Friday the hiring of three money managers and adopted a modified strategy for its investments as recommended by consultant Wilshire Consulting Associates.

Wilshire’s Maggie Ralbovsky had recommended hiring Blackrock, PIMCO, and Richmond Capital to immediately execute the revised strategy that is more conservative but will pose a lower risk to the Fund’s portfolio.

Blackrock will become the Fund’s passive investment manager, handling a global equity index fund and an intermediate fixed income index fund. PIMCO will manage the Fund’s active core plus fixed income. Richmond Capital will handle the agency’s member contribution reserves.

According to Ralbovsky, the cost of hiring these three money managers is roughly \$475,000, about 0.19 percent of the Fund’s current assets.

PIMCO and Richmond previously served the Fund while Blackrock was about to sign a contract last year when the then-Beneficiaries Derivative Act was enacted, scuttling the transaction.

Because of time constraints and at Wilshire’s advice, the Fund board also ordered the immediate transfer of maturing accounts under the CDARS program. It was revealed that some \$30 million is scheduled to

mature soon at CDARS, certificate of deposit account registry service. The board participated in this program when Wilshire terminated its contract with the Fund last year.

The board also ordered Friday the immediate liquidation of assets invested in Vanguard short-term bond. Based on Fund records, there is \$68.627 million in this account. The funds will be transferred to the Fund’s custodian, Bank of Hawaii.

Also adopted was an amendment to the Fund’s investment policy statement, defining the role of money managers and investment consultants.

A year ago, Wilshire recommended a financial strategy called Glidepath 2012 transitional policy, as a means to shore up the Fund’s depleting assets. That

strategy’s projected returns for the Fund was at 4.11 percent and risk at 5.42 percent. The asset allocation under this strategy includes global stock, 12.5 percent, and fixed income, 87.5 percent.

Under the revised plan, called Glidepath 2013, the expected return is 2.75 percent while risk is projected at 3.29 percent. This is based on an allocation that places 30 percent of the Fund’s assets on short-term bonds and 70 percent on core plus fixed assets.

Ralbovsky said that once a “sustainable” level is reached, Wilshire will go back to the board to recommend a new strategy for the investment portfolio.



Ralbovsky

Ready, Send,
GO!
PREPAID



SAMSUNG E1086

- GSM 850/1900 (Dual band)
- 1.43 inches LCD Display
- Messaging
- FM Radio
- Ringtones
- Free SIM
- \$10 Load

Mobil

Available at your nearest Mobil Gas Station on Saipan!

\$29



NTT
docomo
DOCOMO PACIFIC

483-CARE
www.docomopacific.com
Middle Road

CNMI'S Most powerful GSM Network. Islandwide. Worldwide.

More excavations as lab results still show PCB in I-Denni soil

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said there will be further excavations in I-Denni on Capital Hill as laboratory results show that soil in the area is still tainted with polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCB.

This could push back the work completion date to end-March, although this is still subject to change.

Joseph Bonfiglio, chief of public affairs at Army Corps-

Honolulu District, said laboratory data for the PCB-tainted soil was 1.2 to 3.7 parts per million, while the lead-tainted soil has been cleared.

"Based upon the lab data, we will continue to excavate more soil until we reach our cleanup level for PCB which is 1.1 ppm. We will continue to strive for a clean and safe environment while protecting public health and safety. All our work is done to the highest standards of safety," Bonfiglio told *Saipan Tribune*.

Rep. Sylvester Iguel (R-Saipan) said he looks forward to an Army Corps report on its ongoing work in I-Denni. He said this report should be shared with the public.

Iguel is chairman of the House Committee on Health and Welfare and was among those who actively pushed for the federal cleanup of PCB contamination in Tanapag years back.

Bonfiglio said as of Feb. 22, there have been a total of 406 cubic yards of PCB-tainted soil excavated from I-Denni.

Over 800 cubic yards of metal or lead-tainted soil have also been removed from the site.

The highest reading for PCB soil contamination in I-Denni or Edoni has been 19 ppm. PCB-tainted soil will be shipped off to Beatty, Nevada for proper disposal.

Lead found in the area soil ranges from 40 ppm to 3,000 ppm and the goal is to keep it down to 200 ppm. These tainted soils are brought to the Marpi landfill.

PCB and lead are toxic chem-

icals. These are found at a pit in I-Denni that the U.S. military used during and after World War II as a waste repository. It has been identified as a formerly used defense site, or FUDS.

The I-Denni project comes nine years after the completion of the \$20 million PCB contamination cleanup in Tanapag in 2003 involving 40,000 tons of PCB-contaminated soil.

Man gets 5 yrs. for hacking niece's hand with machete

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 61-year-old man who hacked his niece's left hand with a machete at her residence in As Lito will be spending the next five years in prison.

Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Bernardo Toss Sebangiol to 10 years in prison, all suspended except for five years without parole, for aggravated assault and battery.

Sebangiol was given credit for the 12 months and 12 days he has already served in jail. He will complete serving his sentence on Dec. 10, 2016. After that he will be placed on supervised probation for five years.

Sebangiol pleaded guilty to aggravated assault and battery on Wednesday as part of a plea bargain. His counsel is chief public defender Adam Hardwicke.

In his written order issued Friday, Wiseman said he "reluctantly" accepts the plea agreement after considering the facts of the case and the recommendations of counsel.

"The government presented mitigating circumstances in this matter that the court considered

in accepting this plea agreement, in particular the unavailability of the victim and the victim's recovery," Wiseman said.

The victim was confined at the Commonwealth Health Center as her left hand was severely cut.

The judge said that a sentence of five years without parole, the equivalent of a 15-year sentence with parole, is appropriate.

Wiseman ordered Sebangiol to pay a \$5,000 fine, but allowed him to pay only \$2,500 if he pays the fine within two years of his release from prison.

He was also required to pay restitution to the victim in an amount to be determined by the court, a \$100 court assessment fee, plus probation fee.

Sebangiol will not be allowed to consume any alcoholic drinks during his probation and required to report to the Community Guidance Center to undergo anger management counseling and any other recommended counseling.

Police investigation showed that Sebangiol got angry when his niece told him to wash his hands. He grabbed a machete from the kitchen and struck her left hand.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan, left, joins staff and students of Saipan Soccer School for a group photo by the "A Walk to Remember," the annual walk and fundraiser held Saturday morning in honor of former company executive John "JP" Pangelinan who died of cancer in 2008.

Despite drizzle, hundreds turn up to remember JP

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hundreds turned up on Feb. 25 for the 4th Annual "Walk to Remember" to remember Tan Holdings executive and former *Saipan Tribune* publisher John "JP" Pangelinan, who succumbed to cancer in February 2008.

Family, friends, and former colleagues of Pangelinan got up early on a wet Saturday morning to take part in the early walk/run, which started at 5am by the Beach Road Pavilion in front of the JP Center in Garapan and ended at the Susupe Beach Park.

Participants paid a \$5 fee for Saturday's event, which also served as a fundraiser to benefit the Marianas March Against Cancer of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising cancer awareness and prevention in the islands.

Tan Holdings senior vice president Eli Arago said he has never missed the annual walk since its inception in 2009, a year after the death of Pangelinan, who worked for Tan Holdings in Guam and Saipan for 23 years.

"One thing I liked about him is that he's a very sincere friend," Arago said in an interview after the walk. "I can say that I'm his closest friend in Tan Holdings because he was always very honest to me."

According to Arago, Pangelinan would share with him even the most personal of things. "He's very down to earth and he's very true to himself and to others," he added.

Fr. Ryan P. Jimenez said he knew Pangelinan back when he was still at the Kristo Rai Parish.

"He was a good man and he shared with me so many stories," said Jimenez, adding that he was able to visit Pangelinan at his office months before he passed away. During the visit, Pangelinan gave him a bonsai plant that he still keeps to this day.

Jonjie Reyes, *Tribune's* graphic arts director, revealed that Pangelinan was technologically up to date. "Every year, I would join the walk to honor JP. When he was still alive, he would call me to his office to ask for help when he's having computer issues," said Reyes, who has worked for the company since 1993.

Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan expressed his appreciation for all walkers in this year's event, the first time when no shirts were given out to participants.

"The weather has not been good this week so I think it's very special to see everybody come out early and despite the rain," said Tan. "There are still many people out there who remember our good friend JP and keep his memory alive and, at the same time, raise funds for

other cancer patients."

Tan said Pangelinan did not only have a big part in the company but also in his personal life. He said he met Pangelinan in Guam in the late '70s "and we've been business partners and best friends for many, many years."

"I'll tell a lot of people that

he's really one of the best persons you can ever meet in your life—just very genuine and very kind person," said Tan.

All walkers were treated to light refreshments and live music at the end of the walk at the Susupe Beach Park, where shuttle service was also provided.

2012 DISCONNECTION DATES

IT&E would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of these business days

January 20 • February 27 • March 20
April 20 • May 23 • June 20 • July 20
August 22 • September 20 • October 24
November 21 • December 20

will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on these days. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before these dates.

THIS WILL BE THE ONLY NOTIFICATION IT&E CUSTOMERS WILL RECEIVE

You have the right to dispute this notice. You must state your claim in person or in writing no later than **these dates**. You must pay any amount not in dispute to avoid disconnection. Payment denotes acceptance of all charges.

If you have questions regarding billing or service, Please call Customer Service at **682-4ITE (4483)** or Visit any IT&E CS Center nearest you.

To avoid disconnection you may pay your IT&E bill at any location below:

SHELL Service Stations - up to 4:00pm
Chalan Laxdaa/Tivian/Rota Office - up to 4:30pm
TSL Plaza - up to 5:00pm
Online payment - up to 9:00pm

START SPEAKING CHINESE TOMORROW

Private ONE on ONE Lessons

\$20.00p/hr

Call 285-8200 / 285-7764

We want to **BUY USED PIANO**

285-6000/Mrs. Kim

Got Diabetes?

"You Need an Eye Exam Every Year"

Because Diabetes May Be Stealing Your Sight
Even though you are seeing perfectly well

Don't let diabetes win.

Visit the Center for Advanced Diabetic Eye Care

Don't Wait until It's Too Late

Mark Robertson, OD
Magna Cum Laude
Specializing in Diabetic Retinopathy Evaluation
Comprehensive Medical Eye Care
Vision Care

David Khorram, MD
America's Top Ophthalmologists
Specializing in Retinal and Diabetic Eye Disease
Advance Cataract Surgery with Lens Implant
Complex Eye Disease

Marianas Eye Institute
"Where Technology Meets Talent"

235-9090
Beach Road, Garapan
www.MarianasEye.com

One-Hour Glasses • Contacts • Medical Eye Care
Advance Surgery and Laser

We accept: Aetna, Staywell, Molyan's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Medicare, Calvos' and more.

If you can't pay for your care, the Eye Foundation Fund helps cover your costs.

Joint session today for two proposed lease extensions

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives and Senate are set to hold a 10am joint session today to act on two proposed 15-year extensions to 25-year leases on parcels of public lands.

V&C Enterprises is requesting a 15-year extension to its lease agreement involving public lands in San Roque.

L&T Group of Companies Ltd.-REM International Inc. also seeks a 15-year extension to a lease of parcels of public land in Lower Base.

The Department of Public Lands

recommended approval of the two proposed land lease extensions.

The House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs, which reviewed the proposals, also recommended extension of the two land leases. The two commit-

tees offered Joint Session Resolution 17-6 for V&C Enterprises and JSR 17-7 for the L&T Group of Companies.

Any lease and extension of lease of public land consisting of more than 5 hectares requires legislative approval.

The last time the House and Senate held a joint session was to act on Suwaso Corp.'s proposed 15-year exten-

sion on its 25-year public land lease for Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort. The extension passed on a 24-0 vote, with two abstentions, one voting "present" and two absences.

They also approved South Pacific Lumber's proposed 15-year land lease extension for two of its leases in Lower Base.

Source: Sasamoto resigns from NMHC

Joshua Sasamoto submitted last week his resignation as corporate director of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., according to a source.

Sasamoto's resignation, which was tendered during Thursday's board meeting, will be effective on March 10.

At the meeting, which began at past 10am, Sasamoto updated the board about Housing matters, including federal funding cuts for fiscal

year 2013, before the board took a lunch break at noon.

The board convened at about 1pm to discuss Program and Housing Division updates, after which the board voted to

meet in an executive session.

Saipan Tribune learned that the board resumed in regular session hours later. That was when Sasamoto informed the board about his plan to step down.

Calls and email to two board members, including board chair Marcie Tomokane, were not returned as of press time yesterday.

Sasamoto was instrumental in having the Commonwealth

avail of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which provides funding for NMHC. (Clarissa V. David)



Sasamoto

WILSHIRE

From Page 1

all be invested in the stock market without an investment horizon of at least 10 years—as what is needed for an institutional pension like the CNMI Retirement Fund.

The Fund's investment portfolio is currently valued at about \$250 million.

"I am sorry to say, but I don't have silver bullet to solve the Fund's problem at this point. The Fund does not have investment horizon for you to take a risk and [with the amount of current assets], we can only take very limited amount of risk, which also means limited expected returns," Ralbovsky told the board.

She urged the trustees to focus their attention on creating a lengthy investment horizon by combining various solutions such as increasing contributions and possibly restructuring near-term liability payouts to buy some time for the Fund to invest into higher return asset classes.

Ralbovsky pointed out that nothing much have changed since her last presentation to the board in August 2011 about the near-depletion of the Fund's assets and that things have, in fact, only gotten worse.

Although the stock market is the best place to generate funds for institutional investors, Ralbovsky said this is for the long term and "obviously not a safe place for the Fund's very limited assets."

She disclosed that in fiscal year 2011, the Fund had a market return of just 2.9 percent. In 10-year period from fiscal years 2001 to 2011, she said there were only four times when the Fund incurred losses.

"The stock market is the place to generate return but the investor has to have a descent investment horizon. If we have only a one-year investment horizon, there's a high chance we are going to lose money and we cannot take that risk," she said.

Expected depletion

Ralbovsky said that if the Fund continues

to get \$13 million in employer contributions each year, the program is projected to be depleted by May 31, 2014.

If the contribution goes up to \$23 million, Ralbovsky said this will buy some time for the program and will push the depletion deadline to Sept. 1, 2014.

If the employer contribution goes up to \$33 million, she said this will lengthen the program's lifespan to Jan. 31, 2015.

In terms of lump sum cash contributions, the program needs \$300 million to achieve the 10-year lifespan while \$400 million to become sustainable, she said.

Ralbovsky emphasized that this calculation disregards the Fund's future responsibility to active members and solely focuses on defined benefit members: the retirees and other beneficiaries.

She revealed that if active members (members of the defined contribution plan) are factored in, \$400 million won't be enough to make the program sustainable.

JAPAN

From Page 1

er the business proposal mentioned in the letter referred to the sea cucumber project.

A Japanese interpreter, however, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the letter contains questionable Japanese translation.

The Nanyo website also has a group photo of Nakamoto, Fitial, Benigno Sablan, and a bunch of CNMI lawmakers.

According to the interpreter, the *Jiji Press*, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, and *Fuji News* reported last week, Feb. 21, that Japan's Metropolitan Police Department arrested Nakamoto and 16 others for allegedly defrauding 290 people in

Hokkaido, Hyogo, Nagasaki, and elsewhere of approximately 760 million yen since January 2011 in a fraudulent sea cucumber project.

The Japan police said that, in one case, the suspects, pretending to be employees of Nanyo, telephoned a 71-year-old man and enticed him to invest in "dried black sea cucumber export." The suspects allegedly made the old man remit 800,000 yen.

Nakamoto and the other suspects allegedly promised to pay high dividends to the investors but failed to do so.

Japan police said the suspects claimed that sea cucumbers harvested in the water near Japan are popular in China and sell for high prices.

Japan police said that Nanyo's head

office is on Saipan and that it claims to be aligned with Aomori Prefecture. Japan investigators determined that Nanyo's sea cucumber export project "is unsubstantiated."

Nakamoto and several other suspects reportedly denied the charges.

In 2008, Dr. Norma S. Ada and nine other owners of units in the housing complex known as Anaks Ocean View Hill Saipan in Puerto Rico filed a lawsuit against the former members of the Anaks homeowners association board of directors, including Nakamoto, for allegedly enriching themselves through fraud at the expense of the owners. The lawsuit accused Nakamoto and his group of stealing \$400,000 from Anaks. The lawsuit is still pending in Superior Court.

TAX CUT

From Page 1

days later.

For those earning the CNMI minimum wage of \$5.05 an hour, that 2-percent tax cut would mean some \$8 per payroll or \$16 a month that won't be deducted from their paycheck and could go toward buying food and other needs.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) said the payroll tax extension should be worth about \$500 on average to a family in the CNMI this year.

CNMI workers who have long been paying Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes welcomed the extension of the 2-percent tax holiday. FICA covers Social Security and Medicare taxes.

But for Filipino and Korean workers in the CNMI who are just starting to pay FICA taxes in the wake of the federal takeover of local immigration, the new law is a bitter pill to swallow.

Martin Venaranda, 42, said he and his fellow Filipino employees in their security agency started seeing FICA deductions from their paychecks in

January, which he said means some \$100 going toward federal and local taxes every month.

Venaranda, a security guard earning minimum wage, said their work hours have been reduced from 80 to only between 72 and 76 hours biweekly.

"We're getting paid less, and now we have to pay federal taxes. We also have to pay for costlier gas, pay for house rental, food. At the end of each payroll, we're left with almost nothing," Venaranda told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview on Saturday.

If there's one good thing that Venaranda thinks could come out of paying FICA taxes, he said he and others like him would have something to look forward to after 10 years or upon their retirement. But that, he said, depends on whether he's still working on U.S. soil by that time.

The FICA payroll deduction consists of 4.2 percent instead of 6.2 percent for Social Security, and 1.45 percent for Medicare. This is on top of the CNMI taxes that workers in the Commonwealth pay.

The employers' share is 7.65 of the

employee's salary: 6.2 percent for Social Security and 1.45 percent for Medicare.

Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan) and Rep. Fred DeLeon Guerrero (R-Saipan) separately said it's always nice to have an extra budget for anything, in this case in the form of a 2-percent tax cut.

The tax cut and unemployment benefits are part of a \$143 billion measure that also puts off cuts in payments to doctors by Medicare, the national health insurance program for the elderly, until after the November elections.

Sablan said anything that can be done so working families will keep their hard-earned money is "a good thing right now."

"People need help putting food on the table. They need help paying their [Commonwealth Utilities Corp.] bill. They are facing higher prices for gasoline. The payroll tax extension, which should be worth about \$500 on average to a family in the Northern Marianas this year, will provide that help. And it will help our economy, too, because families are going to spend that money as soon as they get it," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

USDA

From Page 1

who are truly hungry and need our assistance. Restore whatever funds may have been de-obligated. Again, condition that the money must be used solely for benefits," Sablan said in a two-page letter to Vilsack, a copy of which was released over the weekend.

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos separately said the same request to restore the \$4.5 million is being worked on by Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Melvin Faisao. The administration's request is to restore the \$4.5 million for actual food stamp and EBT, said Inos.

Since the money was reserved for EBT, Inos said it won't be readily made available for other programs. "Meaning, from EBT to the [food] voucher program. It has to go through a process of consultation with FNS [Food and Nutrition Service]. And that, as I understand, is ongoing right now. Secretary Faisao [is working on it]," Inos said in an interview.

Also, Inos said that creating an EBT for the CNMI "requires a lot of discipline, including some complex point of sales system, inventory system, computerized communication link and so forth."

"Add to that complication the fact that the CNMI is a hybrid system; 25 percent of it has to go to local produce," Inos added.

Sablan, in his letter to USDA's Vilsack, said it is "difficult to comprehend" that \$4.5 million has been available to the CNMI at a time when the islands have been "cutting benefits, denying and delaying payments to eligible beneficiaries, and cutting the hours of administrative staff, leaving long waits for service."

The USDA-funded NAP is under DCCA, which administers the food stamp program locally.

National food stamp program

Sablan asked Vilsack to consider that the de-obligation "might well have been avoided had the Northern Marianas been included in the national Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, which remains in your authority to initiate."

The delegate has been pushing for months for the CNMI's inclusion in the

national food stamp program or SNAP, believing that this will result in an "additional" \$19 million to \$24 million in food stamp benefits and total economic impact of \$21.48 million to \$42.96 million.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial met last week with FNS Administrator Audrey Rowe in Washington, D.C., emphasizing that the local government "is currently not in a position to undertake the [SNAP]," according to a press release from the administration.

The governor instead brought to FNS' attention concerns about unemployed nonresidents, particularly what he described as illegal overstayers who give birth in the CNMI so that their children are U.S. citizens.

"In turn, the unemployed and out-of-status parent avails of food stamp benefits in the name of the newborn citizen child. While the governor believes that children should have access to nutrition, he is gravely concerned about increased reports of abuse of benefits, or what is known as 'benefit trafficking' by unemployed nonresident parents who are believed to be trading their child's food stamp vouchers for cash or for products not allowed under the program's guidelines," the administration said.

'Racist, cruel'

Florida-based human rights activist and former Rota teacher Wendy Doromal has strongly criticized what Fitial has been telling federal officials in the nation's capital.

Doromal said Fitial would deny some U.S. citizen children food stamps "based on who their parents are, or more specifically, based on the immigration status of their parents."

"This is an attack on children, no matter how he attempts to spin it. It is blatantly racist. This proposal that the governor has asked the Food and Nutrition Services administrator to endorse is despicable and cruel no matter how he attempts to justify it. Could there be a worse violation of human rights than to propose the starvation of children?" Doromal asked.

Doromal said the U.S. government "must not allow discrimination against innocent U.S. citizen children at the NAP office."

"It is time for federal officials to thoroughly investigate this CNMI office," she added.

Syed to push 'green card' anew for all legal foreign workers

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

United Workers Movement-NMI president Rabby Syed is off to New York and Washington, D.C. on Tuesday as part of the group's continuing push for "green card" or pathway to U.S. citizenship for thousands of long-term legal foreign workers in the CNMI, even as the group acknowledged that dozens of aliens are now under removal proceedings for lack of legal immigration status.

"Our goal has not changed. We are still asking for green card, pathway to citizenship for all legal foreign workers in the CNMI," Syed told dozens of foreign workers and their supporters at the Filcom Pavilion in Susupe on Saturday night.

This is a follow up to Syed's visit to the nation's capital last year to bring the plight of long-term legal nonresident workers in the CNMI. This time around, Syed said he will be in New York and D.C. from February to April.

He maintains that the immigration status of the CNMI's legal foreign workers should be treated separately from the immigration issue concerning millions of illegal immigrants in the U.S. mainland.

Syed said many of the 12,000 foreign workers being applied for a transitional Commonwealth-only worker status are long-term legal aliens. Besides having Social Security numbers, all foreign workers here are now subject to federal taxes.

"These workers entered the CNMI legally. They have invested most of their lives in the CNMI," he added.

At the same time, UWM's Rudy Francisco announced

during the Saturday meeting that they have been working closely with the Philippine Consulate General to gather information from the Filipino community on the amount of unpaid wages owed them by CNMI employers.

He said the preliminary figure is \$4.2 million in unpaid salaries and claims plus interests owed Filipino workers. Years back, the U.S. Ombudsman's Office estimated over \$6 million in unpaid wages among foreign workers in the CNMI.

Syed said he will also shed light on this and other labor and immigration issues as he meets with non-governmental organizations, labor unions, and officials in the U.S.

He said another goal is to try to tap funding and other resources from labor groups in the U.S. that could help foreign workers in the CNMI achieve their goal of improved immigration status. UWM has collected only about \$1,500 to help hire a lawyer to advance their goal of improved status.

During Saturday night's meeting, UWM board chair Ronnie Doca said the board is in full support of Syed's visit to New York and Washington, D.C. UWM's Jun Conciliado and vice president Simon Sin also addressed the crowd consisting of representatives from the Filipino, Korea, Chinese and Bangladesh community, among other things.

Syed also said during the meeting that he has learned of a few aliens who are covered under H.R. 1466 that have so far been granted humanitarian parole.

"So far we haven't heard of any denial. I am optimistic that everyone who applied for humanitarian parole or im-

» Unpaid wages of \$4M to Filipino workers alone



United Workers Movement-NMI president Rabby Syed addresses dozens of foreign workers about his upcoming trip to New York and Washington, D.C. to continue to push for "green card" and pathway to U.S. citizenship to all legal, long-term foreign workers in the CNMI, during a meeting at the Filcom Pavilion in Susupe on Saturday night.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

mediate relative parole will be granted," he said.

Mar Santos, 49, said he applied for humanitarian parole shortly before Nov. 28, 2011, but has yet to hear back from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services on his application.

He said his immigration status is in limbo in the absence of such humanitarian parole. He said once he gets that parole, he will be able to apply for employment authorization.

Syed said UWM continues to ask for a waiver on the employment authorization fee of \$380 and biometrics fee of \$85.

"Those who need it are currently unemployed so they don't have the funds to pay for those fees," he added.

'Drive with extra caution on school zones, bus stops'

With about 14,000 public and private schools students plying the different thoroughfares in the Commonwealth, the public is reminded and is strongly urged to exercise extra caution when within school zones, bus stops, and other similar designated pick up/drop off areas.

"We are appealing to the public to observe traffic rules: when bus lights—red and yellow colors—are flashing and when in stop, to yield. We also need for everyone to slow down upon reaching and or within school zones. And for every cross walk, we urge every motorists to slow down," Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan said.

CNMI traffic regulations call for a speed limit of 15 miles per hour within school zones.

"If a student or group of students is waiting at a bus stop or making their way to the desig-

nated pick up and drop off area, motorists are asked to observe the 15 miles per hour speed limit or to drive slower to avoid pedestrian accidents," added Sablan.

Abiding by traffic rules and keeping to the speed limits in school zones have increasingly become a problem, leading PSS to issue this urgent appeal. With traffic rules being flagrantly violated, students continue to be exposed to risks of roadside accidents and similar safety mishaps.

Parents and guardians, too, play essential roles in ensuring the safety of their children when away from home.

"As our partners in the education of our children, we also ask our parents to remind their children of traffic rules and ob-

serve safety on the road when children are going to and from home to school," Sablan said.

Along with this, parents and guardians whose children ride the PSS buses are called upon to observe the PSS bus pick-up time when sending their children to schools. For public elementary students buses roll out to pick up elementary students at 7am and for secondary students at 7:30am.

At the same time, the after-school pick up time for school buses is at 2pm for elementary students and 3pm for high school students.

This applies to all public school students on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

"In picking up their children, we ask parents and guardians to strictly observe designated pick

up zones and to also drive slow when students are seen walking and to follow pedestrian rules," said Sablan, underscoring the need to yield the right of way to students at all times during school days, whether students are waiting to get on school buses or when walking to and from school to home.

The school system has also been coordinating with the Department of Public Safety in ensuring that all necessary assistance is provided to the community that places the safety of all school children at its utmost priority.

Last week's incidents when three children were hit by cars brought to light the need for motorists to exercise extra precautionary measures, said PSS. Everyone should be reminded that "there is a lot of risk" when road/pedestrian regulations are not followed. (**PSS**)



Sablan



OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

APPROXIMATELY 14,666 SQ. FT. PRIME OFFICE SPACE

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund (NMIRF) is soliciting proposals to lease approximately 14,666 square feet of prime office space on the second and third floors (approximately 7000 sq.ft. per floor) of the Retirement Fund Building on Capitol Hill, Saipan. Ideally located across from the Governor's Office and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, the building has a backup generator, 24-hour water service, and ample parking space for employees and visitors. Space is available for viewing immediately.

Minimum acceptable terms include the following:

- Per square foot per month, Triple Net (higher for less than full available footage);
- Lessee responsible for own utilities, as well as cost to separately meter;
- 24 months minimum lease term; and
- First month, last month and reasonable security deposit required (amount depends on credit history and financial strength of Lessee).

All proposals are subject to acceptance by the NMIRF Board of Trustees in its sole discretion.

/s/ RICHARD S. VILLAGOMEZ
Administrator, NMI Retirement Fund

Job Skills Class

Are you unemployed and want to work?

Could you use help in being better prepared and more confident at your next job interview?

If so The Bridge Project may have the help you need! We are holding a 9 session course on how to improve your job search skills to make you a more desirable applicant. We will also help increase your basic "ready to work" skills to make you better prepared for today workplace expectations. We teach practical, easy to understand skills that will make you more competitive in today's difficult job market. If you complete the courses we will even arrange three interviews for you with businesses in the NMI.

Sessions Topics Include:

- Participant Assessment
- Realities of Job Searching
- Resume writing
- How to properly fill out an application
- Practical interviewing skills
- Customer Service & Workplace Safety
- The World of Work
- Communication
- Cultural Diversity & Team Work
- Basic Budgeting & Time Management



The Bridge Project
INFORMATION SESSION
MARCH 1ST @ 6pm

If you are interested please come to the orientation at the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe in Room 305. For more information call Jim at 287-7037 or email deltamgt@pticom.com



Participants must commit to the nine classes, be eligible to work in the US and be unemployed.

Program funded through a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs and the NMI Department of Commerce

Meeting highlights concerns about plans for marine monument

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The location of a visitor's center, sanctioned military activities, and enforcement of regulations were among the major concerns raised by residents who attended the public scoping meeting for the draft management plan for the Mariana Trench Marine National Monument.

Some 50 individuals attended the meeting conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration last Friday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

"This is your island, you've lived here for generations, so we want to hear what you think should go on the management plan," said NOAA's Heidi Hirsh at the start the meeting. "We want to hear what opportunities you think the monument may contribute to science and exploration, education and outreach, traditional and recreational uses, and anything else you may have that's interesting or important to you."

Organizers set up five different booths (Visitor's Center, Education, and Outreach; Traditional Access for Cultural Purpose; Regulations and Enforcement; Science & Exploration; and Recreational & Economic Activities including Tourism) manned by Fish & Wildlife and NOAA representatives for one-on-one talks with and solicit written comments from the meeting's attendees.

Friday's audience ranged from government officials and

employees, college students, farmers, and fishermen to regular folk all wanting to share their thoughts about the management plan for the marine national monument—roughly 96,714 square miles of pristine waters and submerged lands up north.

House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro's main concern was the type of military activities that will be taking place there. "There should be none at all. If you're saying that it is a conservation area, how do I know that those areas are going to be protected if you allow the military ships to go through?" she said in an interview.

Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero agreed, saying that military use of the monument is "a big concern."

"I don't see the need to have the military there. Science exploration, any other type of activities, yes. Military, I don't feel comfortable with that," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Deleon Guerrero pointed out that the local government opposed the creation of the monument at the start but the "federal government failed to consider that."

"Now, we have to make omelet with broken eggs," he said. "Whatever opportunities the monument can afford us, I'm really hoping it would come to fruition."

Ogumoro emphasized that economic activities, particularly mining exploration, should be allowed in the monument since it has been found that the area is rich in certain minerals such as manganese, which could profit



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Refuge planner Laura Beauregard of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Hawaiian & Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex points to the map of the Marianas Trench National Marine Monument during the public scoping meeting for the monument's draft management plan last Friday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

the Commonwealth.

"We're desperately in need, we're exploring every possibility that we can find to help us develop economically...This is our livelihood," she added.

Gary Sword, vice president of Blue Continent Communications Inc. that owns the KKMP radio station, stressed that the monument should only be used for science studies and subsistence fishing.

"With those studies, you can do economic activities somewhere else. Those areas should be kept as science haven," said Sword, an American Samoa native and married to a Chamorro, former representative Rosemond Santos.

When asked who should

be allowed to fish in the area, Sword recommended that anybody with a valid local ID should be allowed to fish in those waters, also citing the "rigid" federalization law as a way to ensure that those who are legally in the CNMI are the only ones that will have access to the monument.

Several of the attendees stressed that the visitor's center for the monument should be located in the CNMI.

"We sacrificed a lot of our islands north so it should be designated here," said former Commonwealth Retirees Association chair Juan M. Sablan, adding that there could also be some satellite offices on the other islands to encour-

age more tourists to visit this part of the Pacific.

Sablan also emphasized that the enforcement of regulations affecting the monument should rest on the federal government, given the meager resources of the local government.

"We are broke. The government cannot force to patrol all the way to the trench up there," said Sablan. He also said "it's very important" to have the regulations published locally to reach out to more members of the community.

Senior policy adviser John B. Joyner, one of the members of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument Advisory Council, encouraged the public to continue submitting com-

ments about the monument.

"As the management plan is developed, it wants to include concern, consideration, and response to a wide variety of interests because this monument is to affect us all," he said.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife superintendent Susan White is pleased that Friday's meeting had a "great" audience who were involved and were sharing their thoughts about the monument. "Tonight wasn't about our answers...It's about receiving comments from the public," she said.

White and the rest of the visiting federal representatives also held a public scoping meeting on Tinian last Saturday. They will have the meeting on Rota tonight at the Rota Round House in Songsong Village from 6pm to 8pm and in Guam on Feb. 29 at the University of Guam in Mangilao from 6pm to 8pm.

"These are the only scoping meetings we're going to hold from the scoping perspective but we will come back absolutely when we have a draft plan and present it to the public," said White.

White said the public can also submit their comments and identify other scoping issues by email to MTMNM@noaa.gov with "Marianas Trench MNM" in the subject line or by posting their comments at www.regulations.gov.

"The most important thing is we hear from the people and we're really happy to be here and to be on the ground and get the process rolling. It's been a long time coming but there's a future ahead of us," she added.

Fitial attends Coral Reef Task Force meeting

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force held its 27th meeting on Feb. 23 at the Department of the Interior's main auditorium. The opening ceremony was led by the task force's co-chairs, Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife Eileen Sobeck and NOAA Director of External Affairs Andy Winer. They were joined by CNMI Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Guam Gov. Eddie B. Calvo, and American Samoa Gov. Togliola Tulafono.

In his opening remarks, Fitial lauded the task force for shifting this year's focus toward the group's watershed initiative, adding that watershed work in both CNMI and Guam are exemplary models and should be considered when developing future watershed partnerships. "I am delighted that considerable attention will be centered on the watershed partnership initiative," said Fitial. "I am a strong supporter of the initiative for a plus-one watershed in the Pacific and would certainly like to see the process expedited since it has now been a year since we first discussed it."

The governor also reported on the LaoLao Bay project that was funded through ARRA and

in partnership with NOAA's Habitat Restoration Center.

"I am pleased to report that the 0.4 miles of LaoLao Bay Drive has been paved and drainages have been improved along the road. Stream crossings are currently being improved as well and ARRA funding is being leveraged with EPA 319 funds," said Fitial. "About 14-acres of deforested land in LaoLao Bay has been revegetated with support from community volunteers. A comprehensive ecological and water quality assessment of the LaoLao Bay has been completed, including an integrated assessment of ecological change since 1991."

Fitial also discussed the importance of developing a Bleaching Response Plan for the islands. He indicated that the CNMI Coral Reef Program is partnering with NOAA to develop a bleaching response plan that will ensure preparedness in the event bleaching occurs in the CNMI. Such a plan will help local agencies prepare for appropriate action in the face of climate change including, but not limited to, bleaching events, storm damage, coral disease, and Acanthaster outbreaks.

Showing that the CNMI is

taking the lead in conservation efforts, Fitial also touted the tremendous progress achieved at Rota's Talakhaya Revegetation Project since 2006. Talakhaya is an area on Rota frequently burned by hunters to attract the sambar deer. However, the longstanding hunting method resulted in a massive erosion of the upland area and sedimentation ended up reaching into the adjacent coastal waters and coral reefs. Fitial was pleased to report that, "since 2006, we have revegetated an area of about 20 acres with over 100,000 grass and tree seedlings. During the course of this project, Talakhaya was also declared a conservation area by law. We have just recently completed a conservation action plan for this watershed in the hopes to continue its funding."

The governor also lauded the CNMI Coral Reef Program's L50 campaign, which educates fishermen to only catch fish that have grown to L50 size.

Local and regional concerns

While much has been accomplished conservation-wise, Fitial expressed grave concern about the listing of coral spe-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, CNMI Gov. Benigno Fitial, DOI's Eileen Sobeck, CNMI Coral Reef POC Fran Castro, standing, NOAA's Andy Winer, and American Samoa Gov. Togliola Tulafono prepare to begin the 27th meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force in Washington DC. Sobeck and Winer are co-chairs of the task force.

cies on the Endangered Species List. "At last year's meeting, we asked if a dialogue could be initiated before the compilation of this list. Today, I would like to request for an update on this issue that our respective jurisdictions should be aware of," said Fitial.

He also said that aside from the subsistence and economic stability that it provides, the people of the Marianas have always had a very strong cultural connection to the ocean and the preservation of its ecosystems.

Thus, conservation efforts remain a high priority of his administration.

Fitial announced that he has endorsed the Micronesia Challenge Sustainable Financing Plan, which includes a funding goal to help the region successfully achieve its commitment to effectively conserve its near-shore marine and terrestrial resources by 2020.

Moreover, as a staunch supporter of regional collaboration throughout Micronesia, Fitial came to the defense of the Re-

public of the Marshall Islands when he revealed possible threats to the island nation's marine resources as a result of a federally funded dredging project near Majuro Atoll. "As a signatory to the Micronesia Challenge commitment and member of the Micronesian Chief Executives and this Task Force, I respectfully urge you to look at the impacts of the Majuro Airport construction and the damaging effects to near shore coral reefs." (*Office of the Governor*)

Change in bail conditions denied anew for sex abuse suspect

The Superior Court has denied again a motion to modify the bail conditions imposed on a 41-year-old man who is charged with sexually abusing a 12-year-old girl on Tinian since she was 8 or 9 years old.

In a written order issued Friday, associate judge David A. Wiseman said that one of the reasons why the court previously denied John Ibanez Carreon's motion for bail mod-

ification was that the proposed third-party custodian lives on Tinian and the court will not allow Carreon to return to Tinian on pretrial release.

In the new motion to modify bail conditions, Carreon, through counsel, proposed as his third-party custodian a Tinian resident who resides on Saipan and attends the Northern Marianas College.

The proposed third-party

custodian is 22, single, and presently staying with his parents at a Tinian guest house and plans to rent an apartment in Koblerville where Carreon will stay with him.

In denying the new motion, Wiseman said that, although the proposed third-party custodian was articulate and understood the role he was opting for, the court's concern is the age disparity between Carreon

and the proposed third-party custodian.

In addition, Wiseman noted, the apartment Carreon will be moving into has other apartments that may have minors living there.

"These two concerns resulted in the court finding the proposed third-party custodian unacceptable," the judge said.

Wiseman pointed out that since the hearing on Feb. 19,

the Office of the Attorney General filed more charges of sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree and additional counts of child abuse against Carreon.

Wiseman said the OAG also pointed out that the alleged victim in this matter almost killed herself as a result of the frequent alleged sexual molestations by Carreon.

The suspect, through the Of-

fice of Public Defender, wants the \$50,000 cash bail reduced to \$5,000 cash and \$45,000 unsecured appearance bond. He proposes a third-party custodian.

Police arrested Carreon on Tinian last Jan. 25 after a concerned citizen reportedly called Tinian police two days earlier about a sexual abuse victim who wanted to die. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

IT&E named title sponsor of 2012 MMAC

IT&E has been named the latest title sponsor of the 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer. Title sponsorship is the most prestigious level of sponsorship and is conferred on companies that donate \$3000 or more in cash or services.

"The 2012 MMAC committee extends its utmost gratitude to the staff and management of IT&E for their contribution in the fight against cancer. IT&E is one of our oldest traditional title sponsors and we are grateful for their continued support," said 2012 MMAC overall committee chair Catherine Attao-Toves.

The Marianas March Against Cancer is the largest annual cancer fundraising event in the Northern Mariana Islands. It is the signature fundraising activity of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, a volunteer-led non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that ensures all funds raised are spent in the CNMI. Proceeds raised at the MMAC are spent on cancer awareness programs, cancer patient assistance and other cancer-related services.

"We continue to receive positive feedback from businesses and individuals so if you're interested in donating funds or services to the MMAC, please contact our sponsorship committee chairwoman Rachel Roque at 989-1247 or email remroque@gmail.com for more information," said Attao-Toves.

"We are also seeking more entertainers interested in performing live at the MMAC. If you or anyone you know is interested in supporting the battle against cancer by performing for our cancer survivors and the general public, please contact our entertainment committee chairman L.J. Castro at 483-1027 or email ljmamis@gmail.com," said Attao Toves.

The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer will be held from 6pm to 6am on April 27-28 at the Hopwood Junior High School field in Chalan Piao. Besides IT&E, the other title sponsors are Delta Air Lines and Sorensen Media Group Saipan. **(MMAC)**



PHOTO (L-R): Christopher A. Concepcion, MMAC public relations committee chair; Catherine Attao-Toves, MMAC overall committee chair; Brad Ruszala, IT&E Marketing Coordinator; Hans Mickelson, IT&E Marketing Manager; Maggie Camacho, CCA board member; L.J. Castro, MMAC entertainment committee chair; Reina Camacho, MMAC team recruitment committee chair; Veronica Acosta, IT&E Marketing Supervisor



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-12-006, REV. #1

PIPELINE PROJECT MANAGEMENT, DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE FOR POWER PLANT 1 & 2

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is resoliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced firms to provide Project Management and Construction Management services for CUC's 8-Inch Diesel Fuel Pipeline Replacement Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Contractor shall furnish all labor, material and logistics associated with the Project Management Services including Design and Onsite Construction Management for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) from award to completion of the 8" diesel pipeline project. Tasks shall include but not be limited to weekly, monthly inspection reports, design completion, construction and quality assurance oversight, site visits and coordination with the CUC, construction contractor and regulatory agencies (including US EPA and/or US DOT). It is preferred that the contractor have the in-house capability and qualifications to perform all the functions required (i.e. - Project management to include Design and Construction Management services) and not subcontract any part to third party vendors.

The project involves replacement of an existing 8-inch aboveground petroleum pipeline (approx. 1 mile long) with an 8-inch underground pipeline from the Saipan seaport at the Mobil Oil Bulk Plant to CUC Power Plants 1 and 2. The underground pipe installation portion of the project includes archeological monitoring, excavation/trenching, shoring, placement of bedding, welding and testing of pipe segments, pressure relief valves, high and low point drains, valve pits, pipe jacket, bridge crossing, pipe pigging, cathodic protection, based on 49 CFR part 195 and other applicable codes. Design engineers are required to obtain the relevant licenses in CNMI, as per local professional licensing rules and regulations, details of which are available on the webpage, <http://cuccnmi.net/>.

This project is being performed under a stipulated order (SO) being overseen by the U.S. EPA and Federal Court. The project is funded primarily by a grant from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), Office of Insular Affairs.

The Revised Scope-of-Work (SOW) will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested Offerors, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) (CHST-Chamorro Standard Time), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays. All other documentation can be downloaded from the website, <http://cuccnmi.net/>.

The response to this RFP must be received with the title **"PIPELINE PROJECT MANAGEMENT, DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE"** and **shall only be sent** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via e-mail to manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via e-mail to mika.muna@cucgov.org no later than **Wednesday, February 29, 2012 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** local time and the equivalent time of **Tuesday February 28, 2012, 4:00 PM Pacific Standard Time**. Late submissions and other means of submission will not be considered. A return receipt for the email must be requested and received by the proposer to ensure that the email transmission has been received by the deadline, by CUC.

All inquiries and clarifications must be submitted in writing no later than **Wednesday, February 22, 2012, 10:00 AM ChST**, and the equivalent time of Tuesday, February 21, 4:00 PM Pacific Standard Time to Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org; and Ms. Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org. CUC will respond to any questions and clarifications only to prospective Offerors who have registered with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division for the solicitation. All interested parties including those who have participated in the recently closed RFP are requested to also register through the website - <http://cuccnmi.net/> or e-mailing their request to Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via e-mail mika.muna@cucgov.org, no later than **Wednesday, February 22, 2012, 10:00 AM (ChST)** local time or the equivalent time of **Tuesday, February 21, 4:00 PM Pacific Standard Time**. CUC requires all the proposers to send their questions in writing so that the responses can also be made available to all the interested vendors, well in time.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. Contract will be awarded to the most responsive proposers, as adjudged by the Source Selection Committee (SSC). CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the Request for Proposal in the interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-12-007

SAN VICENTE SERVICE AREA EXTENSION, EXPLORING DRIVE-FINA SISU & HERMAN'S BAKERY WATERLINE REPLACEMENT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of San Vicente Service Area Extension, Exploring Drive-Fina Sisu & Herman's Bakery Waterline Replacement Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

The project consists, in general of the extension of the San Vicente water service area to Dandan Village and the replacement of existing water distribution line from Exploring Drive to Fina Sisu and Herman's Bakery including appurtenances.

The proposed project will also include the installation of fire hydrants, air relief valves, blow-off-valves, new service lateral stub-outs and reconnection of existing service laterals to the new water distribution line.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **300 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The Bid Package and Scope-of-Work may be picked-up, upon receipt of a deposit from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$ 350.00 for one set; at the CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit will be held on **February 9, 2012 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.10, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan.

One (1) original and Seven (7) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-12-007, San Vicente Service Area Extension, Exploring Drive-Fina Sisu & Herman's Bakery Waterline Replacement Project"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 06, 2012**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

A Bid Guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers questions, concerns and qualification be should handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 27, 2012** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Officer, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Larry Manacop, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org or Yvonne Cabrera, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org and Ms. Janina Mika Muna, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant - mika.muna@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

APASEEM presentation: Let's talk fish

How much fish harvesting is "too much"? Can a fishery be "under harvested"? The Commonwealth's fishery resources are publicly shared property. By definition, what exactly is a "fishery"? How do we, as individuals—how does our government—decide what species to catch/spear, how much, and when? What size of fish is "too small to shoot"; what length makes it a "thrower-backer"? Alternatively, since studies show large, mature fish reproduce many, many more offspring, is there such a thing as a "maximum fish size"? Did our government (both CNMI and federal) establish a fundamental difference regarding how we manage our "offshore species"—caught by boats with hooks and lines, as compared to our "within-reef species"—

caught by throw nets and spear guns? Is that former difference going away, and why?

The Asia-Pacific Academy of Sciences, Science Education, and Environmental Management, the CNMI's science-focused non-profit organization, will host a public presentation this Thursday evening by three visiting scientists prepared to address these questions. Date is March 1, location at the American Memorial Park Auditorium, scheduled from 6pm to 8pm. Space is limited and interested members of the public are encouraged to arrive early for good seating.

As background, three months ago APASEEM hosted a series of talks; one of which—the very last on the academy agenda—particularly generated a lot of discussion and questions. This concerned the current compre-

hensive monitoring of near-shore reef fish take; by species, quantity, and size measuring—and questions regarding the relatively newly introduced principle of "ACL's" for within-reef species.

Under its mandate to "sustainably manage" our fisheries, regional authorities have developed new "annual catch limits," or ACL's for fishes caught within our nearshore waters, not just for those caught far out at sea. These limits are especially tailored for each Pacific island jurisdiction. Island groups throughout the Pacific Basin are presently being challenged by these new "standards and rules." The participation and understanding of each area's populace is critical to the region's effort toward fishing sustainability.

Generally speaking, it is difficult to discuss any type of environmental management regulation without having a certain advocacy point of view, pro- or against. Since 2004, APASEEM has strived to be advocacy-neutral and to encourage the application of best-sciences toward the development of sound resource management decisions. APASEEM encourages visiting scientists, resource managers, and other persons conducting research within our island group to share their topics and findings with the public. The Academy recognizes the ongoing support of the US National Park Service in this regard. For more information on Thursday evening's talk, contact Academy vice president Michael Trianni at 285-0014 or via email at mtrianni@ymail.com. (**APASEEM**)



KEOKI COMES HOME

Army soldiers prepare to wrap U.S. Army SSG George Joseph "Keoki" A. Sablan's coffin with an American flag after a Mass at Mt. Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa on Friday. Sablan's remains were buried that same day at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery in Marpi. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Two female dogs up for adoption

Two female boonie dogs are in need of a good, adult-only home. Both dogs have all of their shots and are spayed, and come with their own beds.

Ellie is a sweet and friendly 2 ½-year-old boonie dog, while Emma is 7 years old and a shy dog. Emma is looking for kind and patient owners, as she tends to be a bit nervous. If you are interested, contact Sarah Fryling at sarahfryling@gmail.com or call at 287-1265. (**PR**)

Air Force training on Farallon de Medinilla

Santa Rita, Guam—The U.S. Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on the following dates and times:

- Feb. 28, from 9am to 4pm
- March 1, from 9am to 4pm
- March 2, from 8am to 3pm

The public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. (**USN**)

Retirees' meeting tomorrow

There will be a meeting for all CNMI retirees and beneficiaries on Saipan to discuss the Retirement Fund's current status and legislations regarding retirement. The meeting will be held tomorrow, Feb. 28, at Kagman Community Center, and March 1 at the Multi-Purpose Center, both starting at 6pm. (**PR**)

TES PTSA meeting today

Tanapag Elementary School will have a PTSA meeting today, Feb. 27, at the school cafeteria, starting at 5:30pm. For more information,

contact the main office at 664-3425/26/27.

Veterans outreach

Tina San Agustin, the federal Department of Veterans Affairs' legal administrative specialist from Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, will be on Tinian and Saipan for an outreach on veterans' federal benefits. She will also be entertaining questions and assisting with claims.

■ Tinian: Monday, Feb. 27, 8:30am-4:30pm, at the Tinian Municipal Council's office.

■ Saipan: Feb. 28-29 and March 1, Office of Military/Veterans Affairs, Building 1364, Capital Hill.

For more information, contact Bernie B. Dela Cruz at 664-2650. (**PR**)

Manta Band selling raffle tickets

The Manta Ray Band is hosting a mega raffle ticket fundraiser for its trip to the 2012 Olympics in London. The group expects to sell 3,000 raffle tickets at \$50 apiece. The grand prize is \$5,000 in cash. The raffle will be held on May 4. A ticket purchase entitles the buyer to meet and watch the band perform on May 4 with light refreshments provided. They don't need to be present to win. (**PR**)

Climate of Change featured in First Friday Films

First Friday Films will be featuring *Climate of Change*, an incredible, award-winning documentary shot across four continents. Showtime will be on March 2, 2012, 6:30pm at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center.

Directed by Brian Hill and narrated by Oscar winning actress Tilda Swinton, *Climate of Change* tells several stories of determined everyday global citizens and their efforts to combat human-induced climate change. The film makes a strong case for the role of individuals in saving the planet and a powerful call to act.

For planning purposes, the movie runs about 80 minutes long. As always, First Friday Films is free and open to the public. Find more information about the film at www.firstfridayfilmssaipan.blogspot.com. Subscribe to the blog for regular updates on upcoming events. (**DEQ**)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 27, 2002

Benavente upbeat on tourism goal

The government's plan to bump up the expected number of Japanese tourists this year by 100,000 is going to be costly but acting Gov. Diego T. Benavente said it is going to be worth it. Although he did not specify the price tag for the plan, Benavente said the administration is considering all funding options available, even if it has to borrow the money to finance the project. "It is definitely going to cost a bundle but as I said [during last week's meeting with tourism sector representatives], even if we have to borrow money for something like this, it's going to be worth the investment. We will look at every area of funding that is necessary but, definitely, whatever we spend on a project like this will be more than worth it," the acting Governor said.

Court junks AG motion to revive criminal case

Superior Court Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama yesterday ruled against the Attorney General Office's motion to reinstate court proceedings in the government's criminal case against Glen D. Palacios. Instead, the judge upheld his previous order to dismiss the domestic abuse case with prejudice. Lizama, in a five-page order, stated that "the court has the discretion to dismiss a criminal matter with prejudice where the Commonwealth is charged with having 'constructive notice' of the court's inherent power to dismiss a criminal matter with prejudice."

Feb. 27, 2004

Worker allowed to leave employer

The Department of Labor Hearing Office has allowed a nonresident worker to leave his employer and seek a new job following a complaint settlement. In a Feb. 23 administrative order, hearing officer Linn Asper granted the complainant, identified only as Shamsul, relief to find new employment within 45 days, and awarded him over \$600 in unpaid wages and \$225 in unpaid food allowance. Shamsul previously worked as live-in farmer for Amanda B. Manglona on Rota. Records showed that Shamsul worked for Manglona in 1999 and 2000.

FEMA approves more than \$1M to acquire flood-prone properties

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today it has obligated more than \$1 million to the Guam Department of Public Works to acquire and demolish three flood prone properties and to flood-retrofit one property. The properties included two residential, one business and one Guam Government-owned building. "This funding will assist home and business owners, as well as Government of Guam owned facilities avoid future flood damage," said Jeff Griffin, Director of FEMA's Region IX. Guam was struck last year by two typhoons that caused more than \$278 million in damages to the island. These typhoons and other localized flooding causes major damages to buildings to many parts of the island jeopardized lives and created serious losses for many of the businesses in the area.

Feb. 27, 2006

AGO to tighten rules in issuance of IR permits

Revisions will be made on the proposed regulations on "sham marriage," following a public hearing last week, Attorney General Matthew T. Gregory said Friday. According to Gregory, the sizeable crowd that attended Wednesday evening's public hearing was supportive of the draft regulations, which would tighten rules governing sponsorships and the issuance of Immediate Relative permits. "The participants in the public hearing agreed that we need to be tougher on marriages and scrutinize marriages (between U.S. citizens and aliens). A lot of the individuals there talked about how they knew of individuals that were engaged in sham marriage. They want to some action," he said.

DOI offers Junior Statesmen scholarships

The U.S. Department of the Interior is encouraging top high school student leaders, grades 10-11, to apply for one of three full scholarships being offered by DOI to attend a Junior Statesmen Summer School session in the States. The scholarships cover all tuition costs and round trip transportation to the summer school of the students' choice. Summer school students take exciting college level courses in American Government and Speech, while they develop and polish their leadership skills.

USNH Guam promotes oral health at Santa Rita school

By SHAINA MARIE SANTOS
JOINT REGION EDGE STAFF

SANTA RITA, Guam—Sailors from U.S. Naval Hospital Guam's Dental Clinic held a dental health presentation for third-graders at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/Middle School in Santa Rita, Guam, on Feb. 15.

February is Children's Dental Health Month and every year USNH visits the school to instruct students on proper oral hygiene.

Third-grade teacher Neal Kranz appreciated the presentation, which taught students ways to properly maintain oral hygiene.

"It's a lot of fun for the kids,

they really enjoy it," he said. "They love it because the kids get to hold the brushes and practice brushing techniques."

Though the presentation is not usually geared specifically toward third-graders, this year USNH Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Shivonne Willoughby decided to focus specifically on that age group, since this is the age when children are most likely to comprehend the importance of oral hygiene.

"We really wanted to drive that home," she said. "We covered how to brush, when to brush, what kind of foods can give you cavities, just try to establish routines that they should be doing to help their teeth."

Willoughby emphasized the

importance of oral health's impact on overall health.

"Oral health is connected to your health," she said. "People think of their mouth separately, but oral health is very important and it contributes greatly to your overall health. I just want the kids to be making better choices for their teeth and it ultimately leads to better choices."

Kranz echoed Willoughby's sentiments and hoped students learned from the event in order to maintain great smiles and healthy gums.

"It's just about building good habits for the kids," Kranz said. "Teaching them what's expected and what's good for them and hopefully they can take it and incorporate it in their lives."



Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/ Middle School third-graders practice brushing teeth during a dental health presentation at the school on U.S. Naval Base Guam Feb. 15. During Children's Dental Health month, the U.S. Naval Hospital Guam Dental Clinic promotes oral health for students.

(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY SHAINA MARIE SANTOS/RELEASED)



U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Guam Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Christopher Ogden instructs students on proper oral hygiene during a dental health presentation at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/ Middle School Feb. 15.

(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY SHAINA MARIE SANTOS/RELEASED)



U.S. Naval Hospital Guam Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Tykeshia Jackson instructs students on proper oral hygiene during a dental health presentation at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/ Middle School, Feb. 15.

(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY SHAINA MARIE SANTOS/RELEASED)

Guam sailors hold Learnabration for MEMS students

By COREY HENSLEY
Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class
JOINT REGION EDGE STAFF

SANTA RITA, Guam—Sailors stationed at various com-

mands on Guam volunteered their time as guest speakers during the annual Learnabration at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/Middle School on U.S.

Naval Base Guam on Feb. 17.

Established in 2009 by the Guam Greek Council, Learnabration's goal is to celebrate Black History Month and ex-

pand students' knowledge of African-American culture and history.

"Throughout the school year, children get opportunities to learn about everything they can, but they don't get too many opportunities to get really into African-American history," said Master-at-Arms Seaman Zachery Farrell, assigned to NBG Security. "This gives me an opportunity to get out to the community and help them learn a little more about something they may not learn too much about."

The focus of this year's Learnabration was famous women in black history in America. Students rotated through classrooms to listen to different speakers offering particular topics that highlighted black women's accomplishments.

"The kids were very engaged, very interactive with the presenters, very inquisitive and always wanting more," said Valerie Payne, MEMS event organizer and member of Guam Greek Council. "I hope that the kids will take away from this that African-American culture

is a part of our everyday history, and that this one month is used to highlight the contributions of African-Americans."

In one classroom, Chief Hospital Corpsman Tony Lafuente, assigned to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, created an interactive experience for the children, having them imagine they were slaves following Harriet Tub-

man's route to freedom.

"I talked them about the underground railroad, the dangers that it took and the choices that slaves had to make and how bad they really wanted to have freedom," Lafuente said. "For kids to really get involved, it helps them learn when you give them choices to make, and put them in a spot where the slaves were."



Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF) Tony Lafuente assigned to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam speaks to students at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/Middle School Feb. 17, about Harriet Tubman and the underground railroad.

(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 3RD CLASS COREY HENSLEY/RELEASED)



Joint Region Marianas Equal Employment Opportunity Officer Carla Smith speaks to students at Cmdr. William C. McCool Elementary/ Middle School on U.S. Naval Base Guam about African-American spiritual hymns Feb. 17.

(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 3RD CLASS COREY HENSLEY/RELEASED)

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXII, Issue No. 48Published daily at 2/F JP Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The Grammys, Chris Brown and disturbing messages about abuse

By ANNE MICHAUD
NEWSDAY

Within minutes of singer Chris Brown's appearance on the 2012 Grammy Awards—as he moved liquidly to his new single, “Turn Up the Music”—the phrases #womanbeater and #chrisbrownbeat-women began trending worldwide on Twitter.

What that means is that people with Twitter accounts sent those phrases to their followers, in enough numbers that they showed up on every Twitter user's home page.

To achieve “trending” was a victory for those who wanted to protest Brown's appearance on stage. They said his brutality three years earlier should have disqualified him from a Grammy platform; he performed twice during the show—clearly a favorite of the show's producers.

On the eve of the 2009 Grammys, news broke about Brown beating his then-girlfriend and fellow pop star, Rihanna. The images of her beautiful, badly bruised face were heart-rending. The incident would later lead to felony assault charges for Brown, to which he pleaded guilty and accepted a sentence of community service, probation and counseling—a light-seeming sentence.

At the 2012 awards show, Brown won his first Grammy, for best R&B album. Afterward, the 22-year-old took to Twitter to tell off his critics: “Hate all u want becuz I got a Grammy now! That's the ultimate ——— off!”

But Brown's was not the most disturbing reaction of the night. That came from at least 25 women on Twitter: “chris brown can punch me whenever he wants.” And, “chris brown can beat me all he wants ... I'd do anything to have him, oh my.”

This is really disturbing. Could these women really understand what they are saying? Could they have been in abusive relationships before and are volunteering for more? That seems unlikely. More probably, they are making the age-old mistake of confusing emotional intensity with love, and passion.

But the problem with that, of course, is that it seldom ends with one blow. U.S. government statistics from 1976-2005 state that 30 percent of all the murders of women are the result of “intimate partner violence.” And what doesn't kill women—or men—in abusive relationships, can cripple them for life. Think of Whitney Houston, recently dead of an assumed drug overdose, who became hooked on drugs during an allegedly abusive 15-year marriage. Abuse, drugs, self-loathing—they can be a toxic mix.

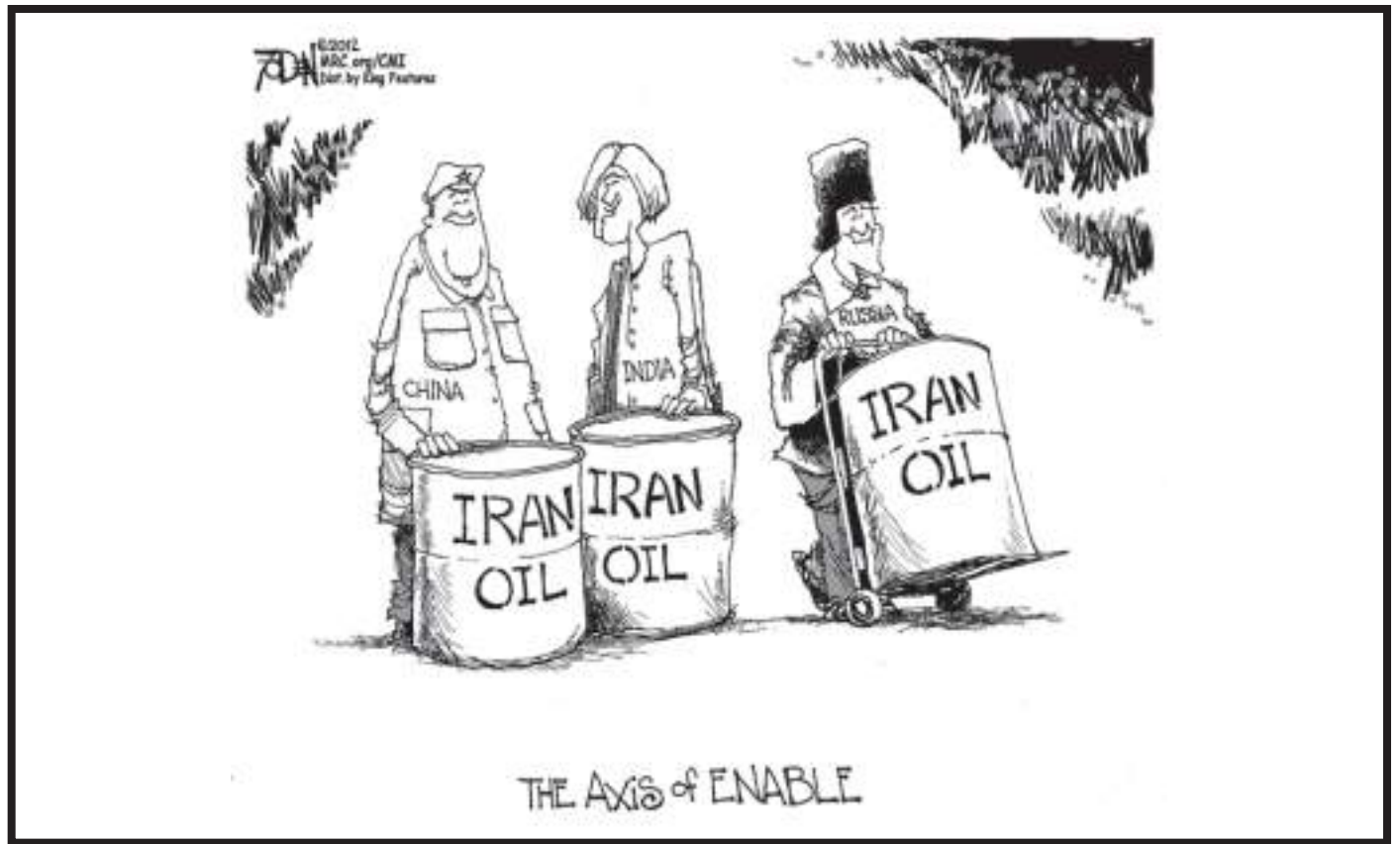
Before the tweets from these young women, we could fool ourselves into believing that they had more self-respect. At one time, women were believed to stay in abusive relationships for financial reasons, or out of fear. The women's movement—with its push for access to paychecks—and the greater availability of women's shelters, were supposed to have won our freedom.

Now, the Grammys, and the Chris Brown twitterati, are glorifying a man who put his then-girlfriend in the hospital.

More disturbing still are the rumors that Rihanna herself is seeing him again. Gossip columns report that they spent Valentine's night together. This is a woman who found the strength to leave him once.

Surely, Brown could be a changed man. He was only 19 in 2009, and the court ordered him into counseling. But if his

See THE GRAMMYS on Next Page



Thoughts from a frustrated optimist

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



recover from our depression. We must change our attitudes.

The second welfare program is our local government. For years we have embraced employment in our local government. As a result our government budget pays about 75 to 80 percent of its funds just for personnel. The mere 20 to 25 percent is left to offer services to us its citizens. Is it any wonder that we have inadequate service in our basic needs such as power, water, police security, health services, education, and infrastructure?

If it weren't for the huge amount of money given to us by the United States, we would be living in utter poverty. As long as we persist in jamming ourselves into a government job, the less chance do we have of overcoming our depression.

As I have written previously, a prosperous country has a solid working class of trained and skilled laborers. The size of the country and lack of resources are not what keeps a country in poverty. It is the will and desire of its people to work that creates prosperity.

The government and businesses must act in a complementary role. Each must set goals and create opportunities for our citizens. However, this does not happen here. The government is only interested in restoring work hours for its own personnel. Meanwhile many businesses are only interested in hiring nonresident workers. As a result the government and businesses rarely discuss how to rebuild our economy together. One cannot do it without the other.

To achieve economic success we need three pillars: Government, business, and the general public. All three must work in harmony to balance our lives. For example, government can set the ground rules as to laws and taxes, but they must be based on what businesses can properly afford. These two entities must also listen to the general public for its input. Thus our society becomes balanced: government, business, and general public.

We must stop depending on mythical investors as if they are our salvation. Investors come and go. When the climate changes, they depart and leave their garbage behind. Remember the Plumeria Hotel? It stands vacant, slowly rotting away. Just above it is the infamous Nikko Hotel or Palms Resort—closed! Yet its darkened towers rise high into the sky casting a dismal picture of our past experience with investors. Across the street is the once lovely shopping mall, the La Fiesta Mall. Drive by and take a look at what remains. Yet we crave more of this. When do we step up and become the owners and operators of our own islands?

Though I am a frustrated optimist, I will persist believing that we have acres of diamonds under our feet. The puzzling thing about that saying is that we expect outsiders to come in as investors, exclaiming to them that our islands are a great place to come and put

See THOUGHTS on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Destrosiu kontra i publiku

Politikan betgansa yan imbidu sumen dañkulu na destrosiu kontra i lina'la' publiku. I man-ma'gas ma-atan ya maprotehe amigun niha gi bisnis. Man-malefa haye gai interes debi umaprotehe. Estague' na modun politikan destrosiu sumasa'pet hit pagu.

Pot ihemplo, humalom un' kompania ni dañkulu interesña fuma-han i Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC). I apas kandet ti u mas ke bente siñku sentimos gi ora gi papa' i mapropopone na atkilon CUC. Gatdon este na planu sa' ti man-listu i man-ma'gas politika kumonduse halom sa' umatotpe yan planun man-atuñgo' niha gi pare na bisnis.

Lastima i appottunadat sa' libre mohon i publiku ginen i presente na apas utilitat. Unu gi dueñon ayu na kompania ginen Saudi Arabia ya libianu ha fahan i laña mas baratu ke otru pot sudadanon ayu na tanu'.

Man-malefa ni interes publiku. Ni siha pagu taya' siña ma-ofrese kumu satbasion i kanaha' pumupunu' i tautau-ta gi apas kandet yan hanom. Lastima!

■ ■ ■

Humalom otru kompania ya ha offrese i gobietnamentu guine \$100 miyon pesus para u hatsa un' sisteman utilitat ni nina' kalamanten ni mafanana'an nuclear energy. Ti laña para una' setbe soluke fuetsan nuclear para u prebeniye i tautau kandet.

Madispacha gi hilu' botlu na inachatge. Ha birague' i kompania tatte Korea mampos disganau ni taya' fotmat na konsiderasion. Pagu, man-a'afaisen i sabiun i hegsu' i Deni para uma'agañg tatte ayu na kompania.

'Nai toma padiset, i mas ma'gas ha hatsa kanaiña ya hana' apuntau i talu' na kalulotña ya ilegña, "Sañgane man-ma'gas miyu, es-

tegue'!" Lastima!

■ ■ ■

Antes de gera, estaba un' familian Japones giya Tinian. Ayu bisnis niha i man-mamogsai babue. Kada sakan, dispues de gera, mafattu ayu na tautau pot para u lie' i lugat niha gi fina' hogsu' ginen i Jones Beach. Kase familian niha mas dañkulu yan modetnu na bisnis babue mapetsisige giya Okinawa pagu. Gai interest chumogue mismu bisnis guine lau sige ha estudiaye hafa propiu.

I otru paire na kometsianten pinegsai babue ginen iya South Korea. Dañkulu bisnesña pagu ya duru mamatinas ganansia ginen pinegsaiña. I namatmaña este na kometsiante iya Marianas 'nai umeyag mamogsai babue. Ha petsige mismu bisnis 'nai ha birague' tatte Korea. De dios mihu. Matuñgu' lokue' lacheron Koreanu na paire Marianas gi bandan agrikultura ya sessu ma-ñgelu' kau ñgai'an 'nai propiu u fan halom mage.

■ ■ ■

Esta guaha deklarasion haye siha para u fan malagu gi papa' banderan republican. Trabiha i covenant yan democrat ti ha pepega haye na pilea para u machoneg na biahen eleksion.

Lau para i man-gaige gi republican yan covenant kulan hegsu' katbariu in' fafana' sa' ni taimanu na atlibes miyu, i franela yan chinina gaige na chechetton ha' gi un' tatautau. De dios mihu!

■ ■ ■

I dumisidi man-kandidatu independente siha este na grupu i ti konfotme ni hagas pasadu na dandan ni tai sofña. Ti man-listu prumesenta siha talu gi mampos machalapon na grupu ni tai dignu gi kustumbren natibu ni mafanana'an "finu' lahe".

I grupun independente para u gini'ot i konfiansan publiku na bi-

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune



John S. DelRosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section

ahe. Ni unu gi entre siha listu rumipite i gueku na bidan republican yan covenant 'nai ha pega i publiku dibuenamente gi hilu miserable na estau lina'la'. Makat na kontrariu ya memegaiña na botadot ti umarepite munae' ta'lu konfiansa i muna' fan gagalileg siha gi halom fache' miserable.

■ ■ ■

Umasoda'yu' yan un' membron lehislatura ni umatrebigue' malagu talu. Hu faisen asuntun linahyan siha. Ilegña na lamegai guaha. Hu de'un haf' na ti hana' fonhayan gi mapos 'sino pagu na sakan i che'cho'ña siha. Taya' klaru na inepe lau ha gotden te'chuñg hila'ña.

'Nai humanau, sigeyu' chumaleg tuyanyu' sa' ha fagchae' dinanche i ha fafana' na botadot. Mattu gi chupun i prohimu ya sige ha espiha eskusuña para u lagnosgue' ginen i sumen na'mamahlau na inasoda'. De dios mihu!

Yangin ti un' chogue che'cho'mu, ke pot hafa motibu na para bai'n beta hau talu lau klaru na ti umaya i inapasen mame kontribusion tax yan taya' bidamu benefisiosu para ham ni publiku? Esta masge pot dos años ya para bai'n repite i mismu malabida 'nai sumaunau hau lumuñu lina'la' publiki papa' gi kuchinu na fache miserable? Pinilon miyu na parehu pineblen titanosmu lau hame pumadedese direktamente chatche'chu' miyu?

A sure-fire way to wreck NMI's healthcare system

By MICHAEL DEARY, M.D.
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

I read with dread on Friday morning the articles in the local newspapers regarding CHC and the Senate's action on House Bill 17-278. Several things became crystal clear while reading these articles that morning.

First and foremost is that the Senate does not even understand the legislation they are discussing and voting on. From the article it is clear the Senate sees HB 17-278 as a "loan" from the Marianas Public Land Trust to the Senate to use in whatever way they see fit. This is wrong. The bill establishes a revolving line of credit from MPLT to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. For those who still do not understand, think of it as a credit card with a \$10 million credit limit. Part or all the money can be taken out by CHC to meet its financial obligations; interest is paid only on the portion taken out until that money is repaid.

The CEO and COO of the healthcare corporation put in a great many hours and worked very hard with MPLT to secure this line of credit to help the corporation survive the next few months while we improve the operations of CHC to become financially self-sufficient. Now the Senate wants to gut the agreement and appropriate the money as a "loan" to pay the government's financial obligations to the Public School System and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Furthermore, there is no mention of how or who will be responsible for repaying the money that goes to PSS and CUC. It appears that CHC will be the ones solely responsible for repaying the funds to MPLT. That is like me taking out a loan from the bank and being told I have to give the money to my neighbor to use but I am responsible for repaying the money to the bank. That is foolish. Again, the management team at CHC worked diligently with MPLT, providing financial information, information regarding the plans to improve the financial health of the corporation, and making assurances regarding repayment terms and the corporation's ability to repay the line of credit to MPLT. The Senate then goes and says, "Thank you very much, we will now step in and pirate the credit you worked so hard to secure and pay our debts with it."

Another thing that has become very clear is that, contrary to all the statements in the newspaper and on the television news, the government of the CNMI does not care about the healthcare system or the health of the people of the CNMI. Making the CHC a "public corporation" was not an effort by the government to improve the healthcare system in the CNMI. It was a way the government could eliminate \$43 million from its own budget. And Thursday's further hijacking of the line of credit is the Senate's way of trying to score political points with the public. If the government continues to interfere and undermine the efforts of the CHC management team to improve the healthcare system in the CNMI it will result in disaster. The CNMI will have a healthcare system and hospital that will be on par with the worst healthcare systems in the world.

It is sad that acting governor Eloy S. Inos feels this is a "very workable piece of legislation" that "addresses many of the urgent issues." If you ask anyone with knowledge of the situation at CHC they will tell you this bill does almost nothing to help CHC nor does it even remotely

address what the original intent of the MPLT line of credit was. The healthcare corporation did not approach MPLT with the idea that we needed a loan to be used to correct the problems at CHC. The intent was to establish, again, a line of credit that we would be able to use as a financial bridge to enable us to continue operating as a healthcare facility while we implement numerous changes that will improve the financial health of the corporation, hospital, Tinian and Rota health centers.

The medical staff at CHC has become extremely disillusioned with the work environment here on Saipan. We have until now continued to do our best at treating the patients at CHC as well as the Tinian and Rota health centers. We believed that if we just do our jobs, the administration at CHC would be able to produce the positive changes we have been told about and encouraged by. Things like expanding our laboratory capabilities, improving our diagnostic radiology services, updating our charges, updating and streamlining our coding, billing and collection system so we can collect the appropriate amounts from the insurance payers. However, we cannot sit back any longer and wait. We need to speak our minds. Without serious improvements in our system we are doomed.

Sen. Ralph DLG Torres' amendment to spend \$583,000 on a CT-scanner for the hospital shows how little even the chairman of the Senate Committee on Health is aware of the problems at the health center. Yes, our scanner is old and outdated and needs improvement but this is something that can be done at a later date once we are more financially stable. Currently, we do not have a radiologist on staff in the CNMI. We need to send our images to a radiologist in Guam who reads them and sends back a report in a few days. Further, we are currently unable to perform many laboratory tests due to lack of payment to vendors who provide reagents and supplies, clinics are closed or open only sporadically due to understaffing, equipment is in need of repair which is not being done because vendors are unpaid, we are unable to send patients for off-island medical referrals because airlines, hotels, and worst of all hospitals and providers who care for these people are not paid for their services. Currently we are struggling to make payroll each pay period, all our employees are about to lose their own health insurance due to lack of payment by the corporation, our employees have not received housing allowance in almost four months now, and the contributions to our retirement accounts have not been made by the corporation since the start of the year. Due to these struggles many of the staff have begun to look for alternate employment, including myself. So I ask you, Senator Torres, what good does having a new CT scanner do when you have no staff to see the patients, no staff to order the test, no one to read the images and no one to treat the patients once a diagnosis is made?

This is not about "greedy" doctors. This is about the healthcare providers' legitimate concerns regarding the future of the healthcare system here in the CNMI. Two months ago when people asked me about the hospital and what was going to happen, my reply was, "We are going through some tough times but we are going to be okay if we can implement the changes needed to improve the healthcare system." When I was asked that question more recently I shook my head and said, "I don't know." After reading the actions of the Senate regarding HB 17-278 my answer is, "I am the director of Medical Affairs,

the highest position held by a healthcare provider within the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., and I am looking for a new job."

With this type of interference by individuals and government bodies that are unaware of the problems with CHC and ignorant of the solutions needed to correct these problems, healthcare in the CNMI will not survive. This is not a joke, nor is this some sensationalized propaganda to garner headlines. This is a sincere warning from a doctor who truly enjoys living on Saipan and providing critically needed healthcare to the people of the CNMI. At this point I do not see the healthcare system here being able to overcome its difficulties with this interference.

Dr. Michael Deary is the director of Medical Affairs for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

THOUGHTS

From Page 10

their money in, yet we fail to do so ourselves. This I do not understand. No, it is not because we do not have the money. A good plan always attracts funds. Frankly I ask, do we lack the will and confidence to help ourselves?

True prosperity and true happiness will not come to our society until we bend our backs, wipe the perspiration off our brows, and enjoy the fruits of our own labor. The only way to lessen poverty is through vocational training and job placement.

A prosperous country needs a trained and skilled labor force. The CNMI has all the ingredients for creating it. We have people waiting to be trained and eager to work. I meet them daily. Come join with us and reclaim our land and prosperity!

Along with becoming skilled workers, we must improve our education endeavors. We must improve our minds and become not mere workers but creative servers. This subject I will discuss another time.

Remember: Find a job we love and we will never work a day in our life.

Do I see a smile on your face? Make sure it opens your heart to the person you smile at. A smile is the universal sign for saying: I care about you! So even if things don't go your way keep smiling! Have a great week!

THE GRAMMYS

From Page 10

anger and narcissism have eased, there is no public sign of it. He seems unrepentant.






The only public message is that the Grammys organization rewards batterers—and so do their fans, and perhaps, their girlfriends. These are horrific lessons for our daughters and sons.

Anne Michaud is interactive editor for Newsday Opinion and a member of the paper's editorial board. Readers may send her email at anne.michaud@newsday.com.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia			
Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲ 86 ▼ 78	
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 77	
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 78	
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 89 ▼ 80	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 80	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 80	
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79	

Around The Globe			
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲ 73 ▼ 65	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲ 50 ▼ 24	
Hong Kong	Showers	▲ 60 ▼ 57	
Honolulu	Showers	▲ 79 ▼ 70	
London	Showers	▲ 59 ▼ 48	
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲ 61 ▼ 42	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 88 ▼ 78	
Melbourne	Thundershowers	▲ 71 ▼ 62	
Miami	Showers	▲ 78 ▼ 69	
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲ 54 ▼ 38	
Osaka	Cloudy	▲ 47 ▼ 34	
Paris	Showers	▲ 55 ▼ 44	
Pusan	Cloudy	▲ 46 ▼ 37	
Rome	Showers	▲ 62 ▼ 43	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲ 47 ▼ 30	
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 56 ▼ 42	
Seoul	Cloudy	▲ 44 ▼ 23	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲ 45 ▼ 31	
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲ 60 ▼ 41	

Tides			
Saipan Harbor			
4:46 AM	Today	High Tide:	0.7 Feet
10:31 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.8 Feet
5:33 PM	Today	High Tide:	0.3 Feet
11:41 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.5 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near Palau between 1N and 9N from 130E to 136E and over Yap state between 3N and 9N from 139E to 146E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of Chuuk and Pohnpei states within 100 miles of a line that extends from 9N148E to 3N161E. A second trade-wind disturbance is producing scattered showers across portions of the Marshall Islands between 1N and 8N from 167E to 180. A cold front cuts across the northwest section of the discussion area from 25N138E to 23N130E. Clouds and showers can be found along and up to 550 miles north of the boundary. A thin band of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms can be found northeast of the Marianas within 70 miles of a line that extends from 25N155E to 21N147E.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:36 AM	6:24 PM	Today	9:40 AM	10:40 PM
Tuesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM	Tuesday	10:22 AM	11:30 PM
Wednesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM	Wednesday	11:06 AM	
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM	Thursday	11:53 AM	12:20 AM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM	Friday	12:44 PM	1:10 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)					ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)				
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5		C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5	
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)					ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)				
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5		C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5	
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)					GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN				
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP		C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP	
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7		C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily		C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily	
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7		C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7		C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7	
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7		C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6		C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6	
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7		C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6		C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6	
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)					NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN				
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily		DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily	
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7		DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily	
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily		DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7	
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)					OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN				
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily		OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily	
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)					SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN				
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1		OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily	
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7		OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX	
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX		OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7	
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily		OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)					BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN				
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7		OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6	
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5		DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7	
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)					GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN				
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6		3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5	
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)					SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN				
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7		3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7	
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN				
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN		DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT	
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM	
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM		C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM	
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT		OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM		OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM		PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM		C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM		C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau		OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN	
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN		C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM	
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM						
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM						
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)					HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN				
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN		OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN	
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN	
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM		OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN		OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN		C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM	
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana									
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)									

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE							
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				

Business

Obama: No easy answers to lowering pump prices

By ANNE GEARAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

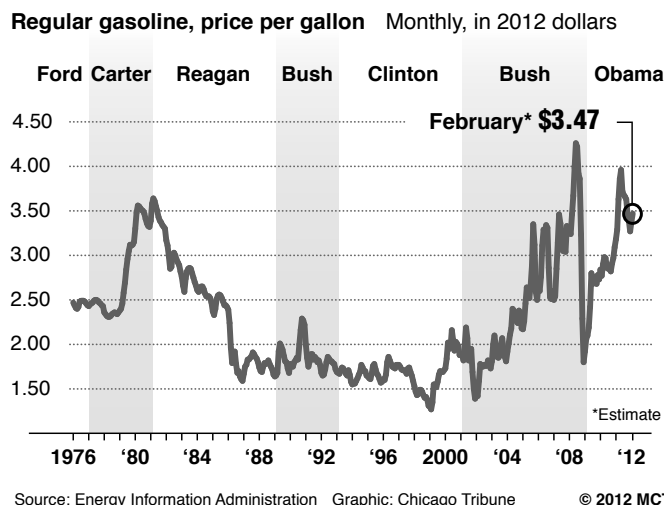
WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama says there is no easy answer to the problem of rising energy prices and he's dismissing Republican solutions as little more than gimmicks.

"We know there's no silver bullet that will bring down gas prices or reduce our dependence on foreign oil overnight," Obama said Saturday in his weekly radio and Internet address. "But what we can do is get our priorities straight and make a sustained, serious effort to tackle this problem."

Oil prices are approaching last year's highs as tensions increase over Iran's nuclear program. The rise pushed gasoline prices Friday to a national average of \$3.65 a gallon, the highest ever for this time of year. A spike in gas prices is normal in spring, but it came earlier than usual this year in large part be-

Arc points to historic highs

The spiking cost of oil is pushing gas prices to inflation-adjusted levels that could exceed the oil crisis of the late 1970s-early '80s and could top more recent highs.



cause of world fears that the growing confrontation with Iran will crimp oil supplies. Iran is the world's third-largest crude supplier.

Rising oil prices weigh on the economy, pushing leisure and

business travel costs higher. Every 1-cent increase in the price of gasoline costs the economy \$1.4 billion, analysts say.

Obama said Republicans have one answer to the oil pinch: drill.

"You know that's not a plan, especially since we're already drilling," Obama said, echoing his remarks earlier in the week. "It's a bumper sticker."

Obama is pushing what he calls an "all-of-the-above" approach to the problem of limited energy resources, meaning an attempt to seek out alternative energy sources while reducing consumption of traditional fuels.

In the Republican address, Texas Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison blamed the rise in gasoline prices partly on the Obama administration, which she said has

blocked some potential new sources of oil and gas.

"We can't slow down global demand for oil and gas, but we can do a lot more here at home to assure that we have the energy we need and to halt skyrocketing costs," she said. "President Obama's policy has resulted in an unprecedented slowdown in new exploration and production of oil and gas."

For all the political claims, economists say there's not much a president of either party can do about gasoline prices. Certainly not in the short term. But it's clear that people are

concerned—a new Associated Press-GfK poll says 7 in 10 Americans find the issue deeply important—so it's sure to be a political issue through the summer.

The price of gasoline, which is made from crude oil, has soared with oil prices. The national average jumped by nearly 12 cents per gallon in a week, with state averages above \$4 per gallon in California, Alaska and Hawaii.

At \$3.65 per gallon, gasoline is still below last year's high of \$3.98 and the record \$4.11 set in 2008.

Facebook risks alienating touchy users with new ads

By MIKE SWIFT AND PETER DELEVETT
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

SAN JOSE, Calif.—Advertising on Facebook is about to gain a more prominent place, as the company works to boost revenues in advance of an initial public offering of stock.

With Facebook planning a major event on Wednesday—an invitation-only conference for marketers at the Museum of Natural History in New York—internal documents suggest the Menlo Park, Calif., company will announce upgraded "Premium Ads" that will be more prominent on the social network.

The new ads also will have more of what Facebook calls "social context," meaning the friends of the people who are fans of a particular product that advertises on Facebook—not just those who have hit the "Like" button for that brand—

will see an enlarged version of the product's advertising. Those ads will say the user's friend likes the brand, adding a social context that Facebook says will make the ads 80 percent more likely to be remembered.

Company officials declined to comment on the documents, which were obtained by this newspaper. But analysts debated the implications of Facebook's plans to increasingly target ads by leveraging the connections between its 850 million users.

"It's really very important and very interesting, because it almost brings advertising into the realm of the testimonial and word of mouth," said Rebecca Lieb, an analyst with the Altimeter Group.

Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg has long resisted making advertising too central an element of Facebook. Nevertheless, ads produced \$3.15 billion in revenue in 2011—85 percent of Facebook's total rev-

enue and a 69 percent increase over 2010.

But with Facebook's global user growth slowing, the company needs to get people to spend more time on the site and make each ad exposure more valuable for Facebook. Doing so is key to justifying an expected valuation as high as \$100 billion when the company goes public later this year.

"Going into their IPO, they were going to have to be a lot more aggressive in terms of how they approach advertising," said Yoni Yadgaran, an analyst with Wedbush Securities. "Facebook in the past has always been user experience first, and careful not to make (advertising) more intrusive. The sense we're getting now is that Facebook is willing to sacrifice a little bit of that in order to ensure monetization."

Facebook faces a delicate balance in linking ads to the connections between friends.



An American flag flaps in front of gas prices posted at a gas station in Topsham, Maine on Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012.

Berlusconi cleared by statute of limitations

By COLLEEN BARRY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILAN (AP)—Silvio Berlusconi's corruption trial ended Saturday with a court ruling that the statute of limitations had run out, handing the former premier another victory in a long string of judicial challenges.

Berlusconi, who stepped down as premier in November as the sovereign debt crisis flared, was accused of paying a British lawyer, David Mills, \$600,000 to lie during two 1990s trials to protect the politician and his Fininvest holding company from charges related to offshore companies Mills helped set up.

The billionaire media mogul wasn't in the Milan courtroom when the chief judge, Francesca Vitale, read out the verdict after 2 1/2 hours of deliberations. He told reporters at a football game in Milan later that it was "half justice."

Berlusconi's lawyer Niccolò Ghedini said the defense had hoped for a full acquittal, leaving open the possibility of an appeal. In Italy, both sides can appeal court decisions.

"We would have preferred that the judge had ruled that no

crime had been committed," Ghedini told Sky TG 24. "This is the first result, and not an important one."

Prosecutor Fabio De Pasquale told reporters "it's useless to comment."

The five-year-long trial was a race against the statute of limitations, which had spared Berlusconi verdicts in other trials related to his media business since the 1990s.

Prosecutors had changed the timing of the alleged crime from when Mills took the stand to when the money changed hands, adding two years to the clock. And defense lawyer Ghedini, a lawmaker, helped draft a law that gave the sitting premier immunity, drawing fire that he was using Parliament to shield himself. The law was watered down in court as unconstitutional.

The trial also was slowed by legal delays by the defense, and Berlusconi's duties as premier. The defense, for their part, complained that the court severely limited the number of witnesses as the statute of limitations grew imminent.

The verdict did little to change perceptions about Berlusconi among supporters or detractors,

and unleashed a furor about Italy's statute of limitations law. In Italy, unlike other European countries, the clock continues ticking even after the trial begins, giving defendants another tool to beat a conviction.

Sky TG 24 reported that 140,000 trials were ended last year because of the statute of limitations, and that they mostly affect corruption cases, which often don't come to light for years after the fact.

"Once again, the statute of limitations has saved Berlusconi from his responsibility," opposition politician Antonio di Pietro said.

Berlusconi allies defended the former premier. "A guilty verdict against an innocent was avoided," Fabrizio Cicchitto, Berlusconi's party whip in the lower house, told Sky TG 24.

On the eve of the verdict, Berlusconi, 75, issued a statement railing against magistrates for the "many trials" against him and saying that he doesn't remember having met Mills.

"Mills was one of many lawyers abroad that occasionally worked for the Fininvest group. I don't recall ever having met him," Berlusconi said in that statement.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

FTC says tax-related ID theft complaints on rise

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government says the number of identity theft complaints involving tax and wage fraud is soaring even as law enforcement tries to crack down. Federal Trade Commission officials tell The Associated Press that 24 percent of the nearly 279,000 identity theft complaints it received last year came from people concerned their Social Security numbers had been stolen and used to fraudulently file for tax refunds or apply for jobs. The agency says that's 8 percent more than the year before. David Torok of the commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection says the trend has continued into 2012. The number of complaints filed with the FTC on any issue has risen from 35,000 a week to 50,000. He says most of the additional complaints are for tax and wage identity theft.

Pressure on Europe grows at Mexico G-20 meeting

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Pressure mounted on Europe Saturday to build an even bigger financial stabilization fund to head off sovereign debt concerns, with the United States, Brazil, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development all urging an increase. While the advice coming out of a meeting of G-20 finance ministers, senior officials and central bank heads seemed overwhelming, Germany - Europe's main financial engine - appeared loath to fund yet another increase to stabilization funds that already have about 500 billion euros. Angel Gurría, the head of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, set the tone at the conference, calling for about \$1.5 trillion in "firewall" funds aimed at restoring confidence in European countries' debt.

Nation

Down to the wire in two-man GOP race in Michigan

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and KASIE HUNT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

FLINT, Mich. (AP)—Republican Mitt Romney fought Saturday to prove he is the strongest challenger to President Barack Obama, an increasingly difficult task given the tight race in his native state of Michigan against surging conservative Rick Santorum.

In the final weekend of campaigning before Tuesday's Michigan and Arizona primaries, Romney focused on central and southeast Michigan's urban and industrial centers in hopes of pulling ahead of Santorum.

With a Michigan victory, Santorum could solidify his place as a real threat to Romney heading into Super Tuesday, the 10-state sweepstakes on March 6. Santorum's victories so far have come in lower-turnout party caucuses.

While Romney kept most of his attention on the Democratic incumbent, he also worked to lay doubt about the core principles of his lightly funded main GOP rival.

Romney is the one facing stubborn doubts from some conservatives for his changed positions on social issues, but he tried to portray Santorum, a former Pennsylvania senator, as a Washington insider with cracks in his own conservative credentials. Santorum called such criticism "laughable" and said Michigan, where Romney was born and raised and his father was governor, was winnable.

A crowd in Lansing heard Romney accuse Santorum of caving to party leaders on issues he opposed, including financing Planned Parenthood.

"This is not time for lifelong pals who explain why they voted for this or that based on what they were asked to do by their fellow colleagues," Romney told about 300 ac-

tivists gathered for breakfast at a country club. "I will be a president of principle."

Later in Flint, he declared himself a Washington, D.C., outsider and implied Santorum, a former Pennsylvania senator, is an insider: "I don't have any political payoffs I have to make."

Romney tried to undermine

Santorum's profile as an abortion opponent by noting Santorum's backing in 1996 of fellow Pennsylvanian Arlen Specter in the GOP presidential race. "He supported the pro-choice candidate," Romney told more than 2,000 at a forum in Troy put on by a tea party umbrella group. Santorum spoke to the group, Americans for Prosper-

ity, earlier Saturday.

Santorum, who has portrayed himself as a loyal conservative and is popular among evangelical conservatives, ridiculed Romney's claims.

"It is absolutely laughable to have a liberal governor of Massachusetts suggest that I am not a conservative," Santorum said to cheers to the same group. "He

repeatedly gets up and says all these things that he didn't do that he did do. Folks, this is an issue of trust."

The volleys over principle and loyalty punctuate the all-out two-man race in Michigan, leaving behind the two others in the field. Both candidates are spending heavily on television advertising, although the better-funded Romney was laying out more.

Texas Rep. Ron Paul is hardly a factor in Michigan but is airing advertisements criticizing Santorum, which aids Romney. Paul was campaigning in Oklahoma earlier Saturday before making a stop at Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich was nowhere to be found in the state and has spent scant time in Arizona, which also holds its primary Tuesday. Gingrich has acknowledged

that he has no shot in Michigan or Arizona and has predicted Romney will win. Gingrich aides argue he stands to gain by Santorum or Romney coming out of Tuesday weaker.

Gingrich is betting heavily on Georgia, the state he represented in Congress, and a strong showing in Tennessee on March 6.





On Saturday Gingrich was in California for the state GOP convention. He forecast a drawn-out campaign that would give late-voting states a voice.

"There will not be any lockdown before we get to California," which holds its primary June 5, Gingrich said.

Romney campaigned across southern central and southeast Michigan, where his family name is familiar, and he reminded audiences of his ties to the state. Romney won the GOP primary here during his unsuccessful 2008 bid for the nomination.

Candidates economic plans, impact

Highlights of Republican presidential candidates' economic plans and how they'd effect the debt:

	Taxes	Spending
 Newt Gingrich	Move toward a 15 percent optional flat income tax; permit mortgage interest and charity deductions; eliminate capital gains tax; reduce corporate tax rate to 12.5 percent	Develop billions of dollars of new energy resources; save \$500 billion annually through private sector waste reduction strategies; save up to \$120 billion annually in curbing Medicare, Medicaid fraud
 Ron Paul	Pass "Liberty Amendment" to abolish income and estate taxes; reduce corporate rate to 15 percent; eliminate taxes on capital gains and dividends	Cut \$1 trillion in his first year; eliminate five Cabinet agencies (Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Commerce, Interior, Education); cut most spending to 2006 levels; end Federal Reserve System
 Mitt Romney	Cut income tax rate 20 percent across the board; lower corporate tax to 25 from current 35 percent; impose no taxes on capital gains, dividends, interest on families earning less than \$200,000	Cut federal spending to 20 percent of GDP by 2016; change how states get health care funding; cut several programs, including foreign aid, family planning services, legal services, arts and humanities
 Rick Santorum	Create tax rates of 10 and 28 percent; lower capital gains and dividend tax rates to 12 percent; triple the \$3,800 personal deduction for each child; cut corporate income tax to 17.5 percent	Cut \$5 trillion over five years; reduce most non-defense spending to 2008 levels with across the board cuts; freeze defense and much social program spending for five years

Effect on the national debt	Since 1970, the debt has averaged less than 40 percent of GDP; today it is about 70 percent. The debt impact of the candidates' plans, 2013-2021, in billions			
	Gingrich	Paul	Romney	Santorum
Tax policies	\$7,100	\$5,200	\$3,400	\$6,050
Spending policies	-2,700	-7,500	-1,200	-2,250
Cost-cutting policies	1,700	400	70	70
Interest on the debt	900	-300	50	640

Debt impact	In billions of dollars	Percentage of GDP	Percentage of GDP in 2021
Gingrich	\$7,000	30%	114%
Paul	-2,200	-9	76
Romney	2,600	11	96
Santorum	4,500	19	104

NOTE: The data for Romney reflects his new budget proposal
Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, campaign web sites
Graphic: Judy Treible © 2012 MCT

Reagan shooter wants to change 'assassin' image

WASHINGTON (AP)—The man who tried to kill President Ronald Reagan more than 30 years ago said he would like to be known as something other than a would-be assassin.

John Hinckley made the statement to a doctor who interviewed him in the past year at a Washington mental hospital. The statement and other pieces of information about Hinckley's life are part of hundreds of pages of documents prepared for court hearings in Hinckley's case.

Hinckley, who shot and wounded Reagan in 1981, is seeking more freedom from the hospital. He has been allowed to visit his mother's home in Williamsburg, Va., for up to 10 days at a time. Attorneys for the government believe he his trips should remain at 10 days.

A jury found Hinckley to be insane when he shot Reagan in an effort to impress actress Jodie Foster. He has spent most of the past three decades at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington. In recent years, doctors have said his mental illness has been in remission.

Hinckley said he still thinks about the actress, but only to ask himself "what was it about her that made me do this."

"I don't know. I must have been really crazy," he said.

Several hearings in the case ended this month, and a judge said he'd likely rule in April or May.

The court documents include reports by three doctors who spoke with Hinckley in the past year, two of them witnesses for the government and

one a witness for the defense.

A doctor who testified for the government noted in his 80-page report that Hinckley regrets not being able to show or sell the paintings he does, most of them landscapes.

"I would like to be known as something other than the would-be assassin," Hinckley said.

Another doctor reported that around the time Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was shot in January 2011, Hinckley commented: "Wow. Is that how people see me?" Then he vented frustration about being unable to change the public's perception.

"I don't have a microphone in my hand. I don't have the video camera. So no one can hear my music. No one can see my art. I have these other aspects of my life that no one knows about. I'm an artist. I'm a musician. Nobody knows that. They just see me as the guy who tried to kill Reagan," he said.

The documents also said a library computer at St. Elizabeths that Hinckley and others used included key word searches for "Jodie Foster," "Reagan" and "assassination." Hinckley told doctors he wasn't the one who typed in the terms, and that the computer was available to a number of people.

Hinckley also said he did not search serial killers Ted Bundy and Charles Manson on the computer.

The website The Smoking Gun reported Thursday on the computer search terms and Hinckley's reaction to the Giffords shooting.

Soldier killed in Afghanistan noted Quran backlash

RANDALL CHASE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DOVER, Del. (AP)—A U.S. soldier killed during protests in Afghanistan had talked with relatives about the backlash over the burning of Qurans at a U.S. military base shortly before he died.

Cpl. T.J. Conrad of Roanoke, Va., who was promoted posthumously to sergeant, was one of two U.S. military police officers killed Thursday by an Afghan soldier amid rising anti-American sentiment over the Quran burnings, which resulted in two more American deaths on Saturday.

The bodies of Conrad and Sgt. Joshua Born, 25, of Niceville, Fla., both assigned to the Army's Fort Stewart in Georgia,

were returned to the military mortuary at Dover Air Force Base on Saturday.

Conrad's oldest sister, Amanda Meland, told The Associated Press he was in good spirits when she and other relatives chatted with him via Skype on Wednesday.

"He was doing good. He had his chin up," she said. "... He did say that things were starting to get crazy from the backlash."

Conrad, the father of a 7-month-old baby, deployed to Afghanistan in January. He would have celebrated his 23rd birthday on March 6.

Meland said Conrad's widow, Holly, was not at the couple's house when military officials initially came to notify her of his death.

"They had come earlier, but she was not there. She had actually just mailed out his birthday package," Meland explained.

Conrad was born in Newport News, Va., and was still a toddler when his family moved to Roanoke, where he was a member of the wrestling team at Northside High School. After high school, he joined the Army Reserve, switching a short time later to active duty.

Meland said Conrad wanted to make the military his career, planning to re-enlist and hoping to be stationed at Fort Eustis, Va., to be closer to family. He was also hoping to have another baby.

Conrad's family has posted a video tribute to him on YouTube. "We're very proud of our T.J.," said his aunt Shannon Lemm.

"We want everyone to know his name and see his face."

Meland described Conrad as a jokester and class clown, always able to bring a laugh to those around him.

"He could barely sit still," she said. "Even when his wife was in labor, he was doing karate moves in the delivery room."

"When we Skyped with him Wednesday morning, he was doing the same thing, making all his jokes," she said.

Meland said the deaths of Conrad and Born, whose relatives also attended Saturday's casualty return, have left both families devastated.

"You see it on TV, you see it in the movies, but you just never expect it's going to be your family or your soldier," she said.

Asia

2 US troops shot in Kabul; NATO pulls workers

By **DEB RIECHMANN** and **RAHIM FAIEZ**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A gunman killed two American military advisers with shots to the back of the head Saturday inside a heavily guarded ministry building, and NATO ordered military workers out of Afghan ministries as protests raged for a fifth day over the burning of copies of the Quran at a U.S. army base.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the Interior Ministry attack, saying it was retaliation for the Quran burnings, after the U.S. servicemen—a lieutenant colonel and a major—were found dead on the floor of an office that only people who know a numerical combination can get into, Afghan and Western officials said.

The top commander of U.S. and NATO forces recalled all international military personnel from the ministries, an unprecedented action in the decade-long

war that highlights the growing friction between Afghans and their foreign partners at a critical juncture in the war.

The U.S.-led coalition is trying to mentor and strengthen Afghan security forces so they can lead the fight against the Taliban and foreign troops can go home. That mission, however, requires a measure of trust at a time when anti-Western sentiment is at an all-time high.

Afghan Defense Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak called U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta to apologize for the shooting and offer his condolences, Pentagon press secretary George Little said in a statement released in Washington.

“This act is unacceptable and the United States condemns it in the strongest possible terms,” Little said.

Security is tight in the capital, which is covered in snow, and foreigners working at the U.S. Embassy and at international organizations have been banned from leaving their compounds.

U.S. officials said they were searching for the assailant, who has not been identified by name or nationality.

The two American service members were found by another foreigner who went into the room, according to the Afghan official, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to disclose details about the shootings. They were shot in the back of the head, according to Western officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the information. Authorities were poring over security camera video for clues, the Afghan official said.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid identified the shooter as one of their sympathizers, Abdul Rahman. He said an accomplice inside the ministry helped Rahman get inside the compound to kill the Americans in retaliation for the Quran burnings.

“After the attack, Rahman informed us by telephone that he

was able to kill four high-ranking American advisers,” Mujahid said. The Taliban often inflate death tolls and sometimes claim responsibility for killings they did not conduct.

Little, the Pentagon press secretary, said Wardak indicated

that President Hamid Karzai was assembling religious leaders and other senior Afghan officials to take urgent steps to protect coalition forces.

U.S. Gen. John Allen, the top commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, met with

Afghan Interior Minister Bismullah Khan Mohammadi, who offered both his condolences to the families of the victims and his apologies, Little said.

Afghanistan’s interior and defense ministers are expected in Washington next week.

Pakistan halfway done razing bin Laden’s compound

ABBOTTABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan was more than halfway done Sunday demolishing the three-story compound where Osama bin Laden was killed by U.S. commandos last May, erasing a concrete reminder of a painful and embarrassing chapter in the country’s history.

Rings of police kept spectators and journalists away from the compound, which the government began tearing down Saturday night under powerful flood lights without providing prior notice. Three mechanized backhoes ripped into the building, and large trucks carried away the debris, according to an Associated Press reporter who was able to get close enough to see the work.

Pakistan was outraged by the covert American raid in the northwestern town of Abbottabad

because it was not told about it beforehand—a decision the U.S. explained was driven by concerns that someone in the government might tip off bin Laden.

The terror leader’s death was cheered across the globe, but many Pakistanis were angry that the U.S. violated its territory and that its troops were powerless to stop American soldiers from attacking a compound located next to the country’s elite military academy.

The backhoes—heavy machines with strong crane-like digging arms—have torn down the tall boundary walls around bin Laden’s compound and have destroyed more than half of the main building, where the al-Qaida chief lived for years with his wives and children.

Army soldiers who were guarding the compound Satur-

day night handed authority over to the police in the morning and left. Work continued Sunday morning but halted around midday for unknown reasons.

Pakistani officials have declined to say why they decided to begin demolition.

Residents of the normally sleepy town of Abbottabad were divided on what the government should do with the compound in the aftermath of the raid. Some thought it should be destroyed, but others believed it should be turned into a tourist attraction to help the town earn money. There was always the danger, however, that it could also draw al-Qaida supporters.

American officials said they buried bin Laden’s body at sea to avoid giving his followers a burial place that could become a makeshift shrine.



In this May 3, 2011 file photo, local residents gather outside a house, where al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was caught and killed in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

Hogs going wild in Pakistani capital

ISLAMABAD (AP)—With a police officer wounded and the presidential palace breached, the Pakistani capital has launched a fresh offensive against a uniquely feared enemy in the Muslim country—the city’s ever expanding population of wild boar.

Each night, packs of the hairy beasts emerge from Islamabad’s river beds, parks and scrubland to rifle through the overflowing rubbish bins of its mostly wealthy residents and growing number of restaurants.

City authorities are laying poison and have announced free hunting permits to cull the wild pigs’ numbers. But to make sure residents don’t get caught in the crossfire, they only allow shotguns. There have been few takers. Hunters are wary of getting arrested by the police, or even worse—getting mistaken for a terrorist.

The animals can weigh up to 180 to 220 pounds (80 kilograms) and have razor sharp teeth. Adult males come armed with upward curving tusks. While they scurry off at the site of humans, they charge when cornered, alarmed or wounded and are a major cause of traffic accidents in the city.

The latest chapter of man versus hog played out in a city center police station last week.

“Someone shouted ‘watch your back’ but before I could look round the animal had hit me,” said Sajjad Hussain, who was on duty when the animal slipped in past the high, razor wire-topped blast walls after guards opened the gates to let in a car.

Hussain had a gash in his stomach that required eight stitches and is on medical leave.

The swine was even more unlucky. In his rush to escape, he bounded into a large pit where police barracks are being constructed. Trapped by high walls, he was an easy target for officers out to avenge their wounded colleague. Not quite fish in a barrel, but close.

“The pig was like a terrorist. We shot him down,” said station chief Fayaz Tanooli. “I have told the guards if another pig gets in then they will be dismissed.”

The hogs have also encroached upon the lavish, not to mention tightly guarded, houses of the president and prime minister.

A team has been dispatched to lay poison mixed with molasses or maize, said Malik Aulya Khan, the city’s environmental chief.

“We are making special efforts. We have killed many with poison,” he said. “Somehow they enter under the fences.”

Wild boars are found all over Pakistan, and are one of its major agricultural pests, gobbling their way through millions of dollars of wheat and sugarcane crops. In Punjab province in the 1980s, the government initiated a bounty system whereby villagers were paid for each tail they delivered, but it was discontinued for lack of funds.

Islamabad was built from scratch in 1951 on scrubland that runs up against the Margalla Hills, meaning wild boars have always lived in or close to the city. But their numbers have grown along with the city and its human inhabitants, now around 800,000 from just 100,000 originally.

The meat of wild boar is prized in many countries, but has no value in Pakistan because its consumption is forbidden under Islam. The country’s often persecuted and tiny Christian and Hindu populations don’t keep pigs or eat wild boar either. That has helped ensure the animals thrive.



In this Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2012 photo, a wild boar searches for food in the Margallah Hills of Islamabad, Pakistan.

2 rebels, 2 children killed in Philippine clash

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine army troops clashed with communist guerrillas in a fierce gunbattle that killed two rebels and two children who were with the insurgents in a northwestern province, officials said Sunday.

Regional military commander Maj. Gen. Josue Gaverza Jr. said he had ordered an investigation to determine if the soldiers committed lapses that led to the deaths of the two boys, aged 7 and 10, and the wounding of their sister during Saturday’s clash in a remote village in Camarines Norte province.

The three, who were believed to be children of one of the slain

rebels, were hit in the crossfire, Gaverza said.

A platoon of soldiers traveled to the village in Labo town after being tipped off by residents that New People’s Army guerrillas had arrived in the area in search of food and to extort money. As they approached, about 15 guerrillas opened fire from a hut and a nearby hill, sparking a brief but intense gunbattle, army Lt. Col. Epimaco Macasilang said.

After the outnumbered guerrillas withdrew, troops found the bodies of two rebels and the boys in the hut. The boys’ 14-year-old sister was also found in the hut with a gunshot wound to her wrist and taken to

hospital, army officials said.

Gaverza said he was saddened that the children were caught in the crossfire.

Regional army spokesman Maj. Angelo Guzman said the soldiers were unaware there were children in the hut, where some rebels were firing from and two rifles were later found. It was not immediately clear who hit the children, he said.

More than 120,000 combatants and civilians have been killed in the 43-year insurgency, one of Asia’s longest. The rural-based rebellion has endured amid widespread poverty, landlessness and faulty governance in the country’s poor countryside.

World

Yemen: Car bomb kills 25 in southern city

SANAA, Yemen (AP)—A car bomb outside the gate of a presidential compound in a southern Yemeni city killed at least 25 people hours after the country's new president was formally inaugurated and vowed to fight al-Qaida.

A security official said it was a suicide blast, and that it bore the hallmarks of an operation by the militant group. Both al-Qaida and southern separatists are active in the region.

A health official confirmed the death toll. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not allowed to speak to the press.

The blast came as Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi was sworn in as president to replace longtime leader Ali Abdullah Saleh, following an election aimed at ending over a year of political

turmoil. Hadi was the only candidate in the election.

In his televised speech before parliament, Hadi swore to keep up Yemen's fight against al-Qaida-linked militants, who took advantage of the country's upheaval to seize control of several parts of the country.

Hadi also pledged to work to bring home the thousands of internal refugees created by fighting between government troops, southern separatists, mutinous military units, tribal movements, and numerous other factions.

"One of the most prominent tasks is the continuation of war against al-Qaida as a religious and national duty, and to bring back displaced people to their villages and towns," Hadi said.

Hours later, the bomb exploded in the city of Mukalla in the prov-

ince of Hadramout, part of formerly independent south Yemen, that joined with the north in 1990.

Ahmed al-Rammah, who witnessed the blast, said by phone from Mukalla that he saw a pick-up moving slowly to the gate as soldiers were coming out. Then it exploded, he said. The blast was followed by heavy gunfire from the surviving guards.

Newly inaugurated President Hadi has an onerous task ahead of him bringing stability to Yemen. He must restructure powerful security forces packed with Saleh loyalists, launch a national dialogue that would include southern secessionists, and appease a restless religious minority in the north as well as disparate opposition groups in the heartland.

An unexpectedly large turnout for the Tuesday vote gives Hadi a

strong popular mandate to tackle these problems.

Election Commission chief Mohammed al-Hakimi said Friday that 6.6 million people out of a potential 10.2 million voted. Of those, over 99 percent selected the only option on the ballot—to vote "yes" for Hadi—with the remaining ballots invalid.

The election was arranged as part of a U.S.- and Gulf-backed power transfer deal signed in November. Washington has played an active role in the transition, in hopes that Hadi can head off chaos and ensure cooperation against the country's active al-Qaida branch.

Government operations have failed to oust the group, which is blamed for trying to blow up a U.S.-bound airliner in 2009 and cargo planes bound for the U.S.

a year later.

Saleh meanwhile returned to Yemen early Saturday after spending about three weeks in the U.S. receiving treatment for injuries he suffered during a June explosion on his compound that helped hasten his departure.

Saleh had pledged to return to Yemen for his successor's inauguration. He was met at

the airport by his son Ahmed, who heads the powerful Republican Guard.

Saleh is the fourth Arab leader swept from power by the Arab Spring. But thanks to his continued presence in the country and his negotiated exit, the political changes brought by his ouster may be much less dramatic than the results of uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.

Mandela, 93, hospitalized with stomach ailment

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Former South African President Nelson Mandela was hospitalized for a test to determine what is behind an undisclosed stomach ailment, and the country's current leader said the much beloved 93-year-old icon was in no danger.

Mandela, a Nobel peace laureate who spent 27 years in prison for fighting racist white rule, has officially retired and last appeared in public in July 2010. He became South Africa's first black president in 1994 and served one five-year term.

Mandela "has had a long-standing abdominal complaint and doctors feel it needs proper specialist medical attention," President Jacob Zuma said in a statement Saturday morning, asking that Mandela's privacy be respected.

In a follow-up statement later, Zuma added that Mandela had undergone a planned, undisclosed "diagnostic procedure."

Mandela "is fine and fully conscious and the doctors are satisfied with his condition, which they say is consistent with his age," Zuma said. "We are happy that he is not in any danger."

Zuma said Mandela was expected to be discharged from the hospital Sunday or Monday.

The statements did not say at which hospital Mandela was being treated, apparently to protect his privacy, but that did not stop

journalists from camping out at a military hospital in the capital, Pretoria, on the chance he might be there. In 2011, Mandela spent a few days in a private Johannesburg hospital with an acute respiratory infection.

The South African military, which took charge of Mandela's health care after he was hospitalized last year, and a spokesman for Mandela's office said they would have no statement Saturday.

ANC spokesman Keith Khoza said Zuma's office also had reassured ANC officials.

Mandela "just had abdominal pains for some time now and the doctors decided a while ago that perhaps they should admit him, with a view to check those abdominal pains,

so it wasn't an emergency admission," Khoza told reporters. "He's fine, he's in good health."

Well-wishers like Derek Kemper, a 47-year-old emergency services consultant, said they hoped Mandela would soon recover.

Kemper said he fought the ANC as a soldier for the apartheid state. On Saturday, Kemper was touring Soweto, the famed Johannesburg township set aside for blacks under apartheid and still largely black and poor, with a group of other whites. Kemper marveled at how far the country had come, and credited Mandela.



Mandela

Violence across Syria on eve of constitution vote

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—Syria has defied international calls to halt attacks on rebel enclaves and at least 89 people have been killed nationwide on the eve of a constitutional referendum that the opposition sees as a ploy by President Bashar Assad's regime.

Assad presented the revised charter—which allows for at least a theoretical opening of the country's political system—as an effort to placate critics and quell the 11-month uprising against his rule.

But the Sunday vote is unlikely to overshadow a new round of international condemnation and calls that Assad leave power.

The new charter would create a multiparty system in Syria, which has been ruled by the same family dynasty since Assad's father Hafez seized power in a coup in 1963. Such change was unthinkable a year ago.

After 11 months of bloodshed, however, Assad's opponents say the referendum and other promises of reform are not enough and have called for a boycott of the vote.

Assad was roundly criticized Friday at a major international



A woman walks with children in Kafar Taharim, north Syria, Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012. The town of Kafar Taharim is under control of the Free Syrian Army for the past month, and people continue a normal life due to the lack of combat with government military forces.

conference on the Syrian crisis in Tunisia, where U.S., European and Arab officials began planning a civilian peacekeeping mission to deploy after the regime falls.

President Barack Obama said Friday of Assad's rule: "It is time for that regime to move on."

On Saturday, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Assad's crackdown belied promised reforms.

"That kind of logic unfortunately renders any kind of re-

form meaningless," he said. "To fight on the one hand with your people and then to claim that there is reform is contradictory."

Still, Assad enjoys substantial support in many parts of the country. Some have benefited from his policies, others fear chaos or sectarian civil war if he falls.

The insular nature of the regime makes the extent and character of that support hard to measure, and the regime has prevented most media from op-

erating freely in the country during the uprising.

In the capital Damascus, where Assad retains support among religious minorities and the business class, many said they were eager to vote.

"This constitution is not for one faction against the other," said Suhban Elewi, a 55-year-old businessman who trades in antiquities. "It is for the nation and for all the Syrian people."

Elewi said he planned to vote yes, and dismissed opposition calls to boycott the vote.

"The country is going forward with them or without them," he said.

Posters around town urged people to vote. "Don't turn your back on voting," one said.

Another—showing the red, black and white Syrian flag—touted new constitution. "Syria's constitution: Freedom of belief," it said, referring to clauses protecting religious minorities.

Syrian Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Mohammed al-Shaar said more than 14,000 voting centers have been set up for more than 14 million eligible voters across the country.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Anti-Putin rally held in his hometown

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP)—About 3,500 people demonstrated against Vladimir Putin on Saturday in Russia's second-largest city a week before presidential elections in which he seeks to return to the Kremlin. The protesters marched through St. Petersburg's streets, chanting slogans against the prime minister, including "Putin is a thief," before gathering at a square. Police presence was heavy, but no arrests were reported in the rally, which had official sanction. The turnout was smaller than many of the demon-

strations that broke out in Russia after fraud-tainted parliamentary elections in December. Several protests in Moscow have drawn 50,000 or more, the largest show of public anger in post-Soviet Russia. Putin, who was Russian president in 2000-2008, is widely expected to win against four challengers in the March 4 election.

Chavez arrives in Cuba for urgent tumor removal

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez arrived in Cuba for urgent cancer surgery following an emotional depar-

ture from Venezuela in which he vowed to win October's election despite his illness. Photos released by the Venezuelan government and brief video aired on state television showed the socialist leader being greeted at the Havana airport by Cuban President Raul Castro. Chavez said he planned to meet with Cuban doctors for medical tests on Saturday. "I have faith that everything will go well," Chavez told Venezuelan state television by telephone late Friday. He said he brought with him a box of books to read to pass the time. Chavez, who is seeking his fourth term as president, has said the tumor that

doctors will try to remove is probably malignant.

Fire at Brazil's Antarctic base kills 2, injures 1

SAO PAULO (AP)—A fire at Brazil's research station in Antarctica on Saturday killed two navy personnel and forced the evacuation by helicopter of 44 people, the Brazilian navy said. The blaze broke out in the morning in the machine room that houses the energy generators of the Comandante Ferraz station, the navy said in an emailed statement. Two navy officials at the base died and a third was injured

in the fire, Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff's office said in a statement. Rousseff's office said the base will be reconstructed. The navy statement said that 44 people at the station at the time of the fire were transferred to Chile's Eduardo Frei station.

Palestinians, Israeli forces clash after funeral

JERUSALEM (AP)—Dozens of Palestinian youths clashed with Israeli forces in a Jerusalem suburb Saturday, the second day of violent confrontations in the holy city where tensions have been

running high this week. Saturday's clash erupted after the funeral of a 23-year-old Palestinian who was shot dead the day before by Israeli forces. In Saturday's confrontation in the West Bank district of al-Ram abutting Jerusalem, dozens of Palestinian youths, some of them masked, hurled rocks and exploding firecrackers at troops. They took cover behind barricades of overturned garbage containers and black plumes of smoke from burning tires. Israeli forces fired tear gas and rubber-coated steel pellets, protecting themselves with plastic masks and shields. Neither side reported injuries.

Focus

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)— The name still resonates and generates goose bumps like few others in the world of spaceflight.

John Glenn.

Even astronauts—not just the rest of us mere mortals—get mushy talking about Project Mercury’s “clean Marine” who led the country’s charge into orbit.

As the world’s most enduring and endearing spaceman gets set to celebrate what no other living astronaut has done—mark the 50th anniversary of his own spaceflight—he finds himself in overdrive reflecting on what has been an undeniably charmed, golden life.

First American to orbit the Earth, aboard Friendship 7 on Feb. 20, 1962. Oldest person to fly in space, at age 77 aboard shuttle Discovery in 1998. U.S. senator for four terms and one-time presidential candidate. Namesake of a NASA center as well as a university’s school of public affairs.

Now 90 and living in Columbus, Ohio, Glenn just recently gave up flying and sold his twin-engine Beechcraft Baron. It was tough hopping up on a wing to climb aboard the plane. Glenn and his wife, Annie, who turns 92 on Friday, both had knee replacements last year.

“We decided it was time to pack it in,” Glenn said.

Besides, his goal was to fly the plane until 90, “and I did that.”

With so many blessings and accomplishments, there’s still one brass ring Glenn wishes he’d snagged: Apollo 11, the first manned moon landing in 1969. It’s a sentiment he’s shared often with Neil Armstrong, Ohio’s other revered son and the first man to set foot on the moon.

“I’ve been very fortunate to have a lot of great experiences in my life, and I’m thankful for them. So I don’t see myself as being envious. But in his case, I’ll make an exception,” Glenn said, laughing, during an interview late last month with The Associated Press.

Armstrong, for his part, would like one day to be in Glenn’s shoes “and have as much success in longevity.” He called the milestone “the most significant of all the space anniversaries.”

“And John Glenn deserves all the honors that his country can bestow,” the 81-year-old Armstrong wrote in an email. “He is an American patriot.”

Five decades later, Glenn reflects with pride on the accomplishments of all seven of NASA’s original Mercury astronauts—not just his own.

“It’s amazing to me to look back 50 years and think that it’s been 50 years,” Glenn said, seated in his top-floor office at Ohio State University, inside the school of public affairs that bears his name.

Nearly every day he’s asked about spaceflight or NASA, so “it’s remained very vivid to me.”

Glenn is reluctant to comment on his superstar status. He’s as modest and down-to-Earth as ever. He cites attitude and exercise—he tries to walk a couple of miles every day—as key to his active longevity.

He walks and talks like a much

younger man—standing straight and tall, and asking questions, not just answering them, in a clear and steady voice. He appears almost as robust as he was for his shuttle ride at age 77.

The only other surviving Mercury astronaut, Scott Carpenter, ranks Glenn as tops among the hand-picked military test pilots presented in 1959 as the Mercury Seven.

“He’s a very good man,” said Carpenter, 86, who followed Glenn into orbit on May 24, 1962. “He’s a grown-up man, but he’s still a very good Boy Scout.”

Fifty years ago on Monday, Glenn circled Earth three times in five hours, putting America on even footing with the Soviet Union. The Soviets already had laid claim to the world’s first manmade satellite, Sputnik, and the first spaceman, Yuri Gagarin, who had orbited the globe a year earlier. Gagarin logged a full revolution; the next cosmonaut to fly spent an entire day in orbit.

Finally, it was America’s turn to shine. But it was a nail-biter.

Unlike the secretive Soviet space program, NASA conducted its manned launches on live TV.

First, a thruster malfunctioned in orbit. Glenn had to take manual control. Then there were signs that the protective heat shield on his capsule was loose.

No one, Glenn included, knew whether he would survive the fiery re-

entry. The shield proved to be tight, and Glenn returned a national hero on the scale of Charles Lindbergh.

Just outside Glenn’s office at Ohio State is the hand controller he used to fly the Friendship 7 capsule. The display box also holds the small failed thruster.

The artifacts are among more than 1,000 boxloads of materials he gave Ohio State for safekeeping and display, with more to come. The items span his entire life, from his small-town Ohio boyhood to his ace-flying days of World War II and Korea, to NASA to Democratic U.S. senator for his home state for 24 years, to his brief bid for president in 1984.

The capsule itself and Glenn’s silver spacesuit are at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Air and Space Museum.

Glenn hasn’t auctioned any of his memorabilia, unlike some space pioneers who have found themselves in legal tussles with NASA. “I have never sold a single thing. Nor will I,” Glenn said firmly.

His hope is that the mementos drum up interest among schoolchildren in



In this photo provided by NASA, Sen. John Glenn poses for a portrait shortly after doing live television interviews from the Ohio State University Union building, Monday, Feb. 20, 2012, in Columbus, Ohio. Feb. 20 marks the 50th anniversary of Glenn’s historic flight. Glenn was the first American to orbit Earth.

Godspeed John Glenn: 50 years since first US orbit

space, science and technology.

A collectible from that first flight inspired astronaut Donald Pettit, 56, now a resident of the International Space Station. He recalls getting a pair of Red Bull Jets sneakers as a boy growing up in Oregon, and inside the box was a 45-rpm record of Glenn describing his orbital flight. The recording blew Pettit away, as did the photos of the pioneering astronauts that appeared in Life magazine. (Life held exclusive rights to the stories of the original Mercury Seven astronauts.)

From that moment on, Pettit was captivated with space, as were so many of his Cold War-born generation.

With Glenn’s flight, “spaceflight moved from science fiction to science fact,” Pettit said from orbit last month.

All told, 330 Americans have followed Glenn into orbit.

Glenn was actually the third American—and the fifth person—to rocket into space. Alan Shepard and Gus Grissom were confined to 15-minute sub-orbital hops in 1961, the same year the two Soviet cosmonauts blazed trails into orbit.

America was badly behind. Un-

manned U.S. rockets kept exploding on the launch pads.

“Rocket performance was far from predictable,” Armstrong noted in his email.

The stakes couldn’t have been higher when it came time for Glenn to soar. And fears abounded as to whether a man could survive weightlessness: Would his vision be impaired to the point he couldn’t land his vessel? Could he swallow food? Might he become so elated with space that he might never wish to return to Earth?

Glenn often is asked whether he was afraid.

“Are you apprehensive about the situation you’re in? Yeah, but you volunteered, you want to do this thing, it’s important for the country, and you’re glad to have been selected for it, and you’re going to do the best job you can possibly do.”

Ten times Glenn’s launch was delayed. Finally, on the morning of Feb. 20, 1962, Carpenter called out from the blockhouse, “Godspeed John Glenn” moments before the Mercury-Atlas rocket ignited.

Glenn did not hear Carpenter’s po-

etic send-off until after the flight.

“That meant a lot, and it’s meant a lot since then,” Glenn said. “It just showed we were all working together at that time.”

The words came to Carpenter at that moment. It’s become one of the most memorable quotes from spaceflight.

What Glenn needed was “simply speed, and it occurred to me that you could ask the higher power for the speed,” Carpenter said earlier this month from his winter home in South Florida.

“It was an appropriate bon voyage, a prayer, goodbye and good luck all wrapped up with a concise statement, I think,” Carpenter said.

He will join John and Annie Glenn, and their children, semiretired Dr. David Glenn, and artist Lyn Glenn, in anniversary celebrations at Kennedy Space Center on Friday and Saturday. Married for 68 years, the Glenns are virtually inseparable. They met in the playpen as toddlers in New Concord, Ohio.

More than 100 retirees who worked on Project Mercury also will gather for a reunion this weekend at Cape Canaveral. On Monday, the actual anniversary, the Glenns will attend an Ohio State gala.

The two surviving Mercury astronauts will pay homage to their deceased colleagues: Shepard, Grissom, Wally Schirra, Gordon Cooper and Deke Slayton.

The seven remain bonded forever.

“We were very competitive and we worked very, very hard,” Glenn recalled. “But once somebody had been selected for a flight, you never saw a group get together any tighter than that group to support that flight, and that’s just the way it was. That happened that way on every single flight.”

They believed strongly in what they were doing, Glenn said.

Once Americans achieved orbit and caught up with the Soviets, “I think people really felt that we really were on the way back, sort of a turning point, I think, in our national psyche,” Glenn said.

So it’s distressing for Glenn that 50 years after his first spaceflight, America no longer has its own means of getting astronauts to orbit.

Glenn still rues the day in 2004, one year after the Columbia disaster, that President George W. Bush announced the space shuttle program would end in 2010, to be followed by a moon base and eventual Mars expeditions. The lunar idea was shelved by President Barack Obama, and asteroids are the newest targets of opportunity.

In the months leading up to the final shuttle flight last July, Glenn tried, in vain, to persuade Obama to keep the ships flying until a replacement rocket became available.

“It’s unseemly to me that here we are supposedly the world’s greatest space-faring nation and we don’t even have a way to get back and forth to our own International Space Station,” he said.

NASA remains dependent on Russia until U.S. private industry is able to take astronauts to the space station—an estimated five years away.

“The leaders of tomorrow are on the campuses of today,” Glenn likes to say about the John Glenn School of Public Affairs. When reminded that the astronauts of tomorrow are, too, he noted: “If we can just get something for them to ride.”

Health & Fitness

Cancer's growing burden: the high cost of care

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP CHIEF MEDICAL WRITER

Patti Tyree was afraid that cancer would steal her future. Instead, the cost of treating it has.

She had hoped to buy a small farm with money inherited from her mother. But copayments for just one \$18,000 round of breast chemotherapy and one shot of a nearly \$15,000 blood-boosting drug cost her \$2,000.

Bills for other treatments are still coming, and almost half of her \$25,000 inheritance is gone.

"I supposedly have pretty good insurance," said Tyree, 57, a recently retired federal worker who lives near Roanoke, Va. "How can anybody afford this?"

Forty years after the National Cancer Act launched the "war on cancer," the battle is not just finding cures and better treatments but also being able to afford them.

New drugs often cost \$100,000 or more a year. Patients are being put on them sooner in the course of their illness and for a longer time—sometimes for the rest of their lives. The latest trend is to use these drugs in combination, guided by genetic tests that allow more personalized treatment but also add to its expense.

It's not just drugs: Radiation treatment is becoming more high-tech, and each leap in technology has brought a quantum leap in expense. Proton therapy is one example—it costs twice as much as conventional radiation and is attracting prostate cancer patients despite a lack of evidence that it is any better.

The financial strain is showing: Some programs that help people pay their bills have seen a rise in requests, and medical bills are a leading cause of bankruptcies.

"Patients have to pay more for their premiums, more for their copayments, more for their deductibles. It's become harder to afford what we have, and what we have is becoming not only more costly but also complex," said Dr. Michael Hassett, a cancer specialist and policy researcher at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

Insurers also are being squeezed by laws that require coverage and restrict raising premiums. And the burden is growing on Medicare, which in some cases is paying for treatments and tests that have not been shown to benefit patients.

Why have costs escalated so much?

To some extent, it's the price of success.

Cancer deaths have been declining in the United States since the early 1990s. Two out of 3 people now live at least five years after a cancer diagnosis, up from 1 out of 2 in the 1970s, according to the American Society of Clinical Oncology, doctors who treat the



AP
In this Friday Dec. 20, 2011 photo Patti Tyree sits in front medical bills spread out on her kitchen table in Salem, Va.

disease. Nine out of 10 women with early-stage breast cancer are alive five years after their diagnosis and are probably cured.

Modern treatments have fewer side effects and allow patients to have a greater quality of life than chemotherapy did in the past. But they are far more toxic financially.

Of the nation's 10 most expensive medical conditions, cancer has the highest per-person price. The total cost of treating cancer in the U.S. rose from about \$95.5 billion in 2000 to \$124.6 billion in 2010, the National Cancer Institute estimates. The true tab is higher—the agency bases its estimates on average costs from 2001-2006, before many expensive treatments came out.

Cancer costs are projected to reach \$158 billion, in 2010 dollars, by the year 2020, because of a growing population of older people who are more likely to develop cancer.

That's the societal cost. For

individual patients, costs can vary widely even for the same drug. Dr. Bruce Roth, a cancer specialist at Washington University in St. Louis, tells of Zytiga, a prostate cancer medicine approved last year. It costs \$6,100 a month and insurers differ on how much they cover.

"I've had one patient pay \$1.50 copay a month and another patient be quoted \$5,943," Roth said. Now whenever he hears about a promising new cancer drug, he worries it will be another case "where finances end up determining who gets it."

Tyree, the woman from Virginia, said the hospital billed her insurer \$14,865 for Neulasta, a shot to boost white blood cells and help her tolerate chemotherapy. Several cancer specialists said Neulasta usually costs less than half that amount, but the charge was \$12,000 for Tyree's friend and blog postings by other cancer patients tell similar stories.

The worst part: A much cheaper

alternative is available—a different formulation of Neulasta—but many patients aren't offered that option. There's even a cheaper way to get Neulasta, but hospitals make a lot of money giving the shot instead of teaching a patient or a caregiver how to do that.

Tyree said doctors told her Neulasta was "completely routine and everybody got it." She had no idea how much she and her insurer would have to pay for it until the bill came.

A recent American Cancer Society survey found that one-quarter of U.S. cancer patients put off getting a test or treatment because of cost, the group's chief medical officer, Dr. Otis Brawley, writes in his new book "How We Do Harm," which discusses costs and argues for more rational use of health care. One out of 5 survey respondents over 65 said they had used all or much of their savings on cancer care.

The burden hits hard on the middle class—people too well off for programs that cover the poor but unable to afford what cancer care often costs.

Dr. Amy Abernethy, director of the cancer care research program at Duke University, did a study of 250 such patients from around the country. Most were women with breast cancer, including Tyree. All but one had insurance, and two-thirds were covered by Medicare. The vast majority also had prescription drug coverage.

Their out-of-pocket expenses averaged \$712 a month for doctor visits, medicines, lost wages and travel to appointments. To pay for cancer drugs, half spent less on food and clothes, and 43 percent borrowed money or used credit. Also, 26 percent did not fill a prescription, 22 percent filled part of one and 20 percent took less than prescribed.

"Patients don't just have cancer, and that's becoming more and more of a problem" because they also are struggling to buy medicines for heart disease, diabetes and other conditions, Abernethy said.

The challenge will grow as the newest trend in cancer care takes hold: using the new, gene-targeting drugs in combination. There

has been limited success using them one at a time—they tend to buy a few more months or a year or two of life but usually are not cures.

"Almost certainly we will have to use multiple drugs" to shut down all of a tumor's pathways rather than just the main one attacked by a single drug, said Dr. Allen Lichter, the oncology society's chief.

ON THE NET

- Advice on costs: <http://bit.ly/arjDb2>
- Questions to ask doctors: <http://bit.ly/wdzaj3>
- Financial help: <http://www.needymeds.org> and <http://bit.ly/nzlcqB>
- Cancer milestones: <http://CancerProgress.Net>

Ironically, "one of the answers to making cancer therapy more cost-effective is to find these targeted agents" and use genetic tests to narrow down which patients really benefit instead of giving them to everyone with a particular type of cancer, Lichter said. For example, the new lung cancer drug Zalcory targets a gene that is present in only 5 percent of lung cancers, but it helps 60 percent of those patients.

Here's where things get sticky. Desperate patients often demand treatments that have a very small chance of helping

them. And many doctors feel they have a duty to offer anything that might help, regardless of the cost to insurers and society, said Hassett, the policy researcher from Boston.

An example is the outcry over the government's recent withdrawal of approval of Avastin for breast cancer. Studies showed the drug did not improve survival for most women and there are no biomarkers to identify the few it does help. Many doctors and patients still want access to the drug, and Medicare is still paying for it.

But denying "useless" treatment isn't just about saving money—it's about avoiding harm and false hope, Brawley writes in his book. "A rational system of health care has to have the ability to say no, and to have it stick," he contends.

Cost can still be a concern long after initial treatment. Many breast cancer patients take medicines for five years to prevent a recurrence. Tyree, the woman from Virginia, is about to start on one of these, Arimidex. It is newer and somewhat more effective than tamoxifen, a medicine long used to prevent cancer's return, but it is also more expensive.

If insurance covers only part of it, "I'll have to pay," Tyree said. "And I don't have any idea how much it is."

Doctors telling more adults: Get out and exercise

ATLANTA (AP)—More and more U.S. adults are being told by their doctor to get out and exercise, according to government survey released Thursday.

Nearly 33 percent of adults who saw a doctor in the previous year said they were told to exercise. That was up from about 23 percent in 2000, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported.

The report also found more women got that advice than men. And among people with chronic health problems, diabet-

ics, were the most likely to get the advice and cancer patients were least likely.

The most dramatic—and surprising—increases were reported in patients age 85 and older. In 2000, about 15 percent were told by doctors to exercise. By 2010, almost 30 percent were getting such a recommendation.

"It's very encouraging that doctors feel people at that age still have time to live and can make their health better," said Pat Barnes, a CDC health statistician who was lead author of the report.

The report was based on a survey of nearly 22,000 adults in 2010. The CDC then compared the results to similar surveys done in 2000 and 2005.

The doctors' advice may be getting through to at least some people. Other CDC data has found that about 51 percent of Americans said they exercise regularly in 2009, up from about 46 percent in 2001.

However, more than one third of U.S. adults are obese, a statistic that's held steady for nearly a decade.

Personal Trainer

How to use a jump rope

Rope jumping can be done intensely or casually, but done correctly at any speed, it provides vigorous aerobic exercise.

Getting started: For first few weeks, alternate 30 seconds of jumping with 30 seconds of jogging in place; gradually build up to 2-min. intervals of jumping only

Not a full workout Jump rope occasionally for agility, strength and endurance training; it's a useful rainy day substitute when cycling or jogging are difficult

NOTE: Before beginning any aerobic exercise program, see a doctor to make sure it is safe for you © 2012 MCT

Look straight ahead, not at your feet

Avoid moving arms too much

Keep body erect and relaxed

Bend knees slightly

Land on balls of feet, not heels

Wear aerobic shoes or supportive sneakers

At first, turn rope just fast enough to keep its arc, then go faster

Source: "The Wellness Encyclopedia" Graphics: Paul Tripp

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

*Antonio Muña Dela Cruz***Lovingly known as "Ton"**

Born on January 17, 1951 was called to eternal rest on February 21, 2012 in San Jose, Tinian

In his new life, he now joins his:

Parents: †Manuel Lizama & †Blandina Muna Dela Cruz
Maternal Grandparents: †Vicente Sablan & †Soledad Cabrera Muna
Paternal Grandparents: †Pedro Salas Dela Cruz & †Dolores Lizama Dela Cruz

Sisters: †Ignacia Muna Dela Cruz
 †Dolores Muna Dela Cruz

His loving memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Jesusa A. Dela Cruz

Children:

- **Melissa E. Dela Cruz and Peter Mendiola**
 Children: Vincent & Joy (Isaac Koa, Isabela Kaya), Lenisha Rose & Andrew (Samantha Deanne, Valerie Alissa, Cilayah Grace), Rachel & Lawrence (Alisha Janel, Avery Janes), Michael & Elisha (Ezekiel Ryan, Ezekia Paul), Ryan & Mae, Nathanal
- **Vicki Dela Cruz & Donald L. Allgood III**
- **Rose Ann Dela Cruz & William A. Guevarra**
 Children: Sharlene Marie, Selena Maria & William Christopher
- **Sandra T. Dela Cruz & Wayne Lizama**
 Children: †Nasha Marie, Junora, Renandra, Reanna, Wayomi, Wayan, Wayne Jr. & Rosa
- **John T. Dela Cruz & Jormalou B. Tamonte**
 Children: Jonalyn Tiara, Jhomari, Jessilyn Mari, Jarissa Mikayla, Zylene, Kyle John, Xavier John
- **Christopher W. & Jhonnie Castro Aguon**
 Children: John
- **Connie T. Dela Cruz**
 Children: Lizann Courtney, Austin Jose, Alonie Tiara, Donald John, & Victoria Rosanne
- **Rozabel C. Aguon & Michael Allen**
 Children: Michael Steven
- **Antonio Jr. Dela Cruz & Francine Perez**
 Children: Austin Michael & Maria Rose
- **Robert T. Dela Cruz & Rowena Cabrera**
 Children: Emmanuel John, Alvin Jr. Zyra, Kiana Rose, Ryan Robert & Robert Jr.
- **Dannell A. Aguon**

- **Mariano Manuel Dela Cruz**
- **Tonyo G. & Francine R. Aguon**
 Children: Arianne Jade
- **Randy T. Dela Cruz**
- **Ashia Santos**

Brothers & Sisters:

†Soledad Dela Cruz & †Henry C. Santos

Children: Gabriel & Grace (Tara, Savannah, Genieve, Gabriel Jr., Jeremy), Josepha & †Warren (Warren John & Renae (Ryan), Wayne Jermaine, Wally Jean, Wells Joel & Warren Jr.) Josephine & Walter (Walter Ken & Bridgette (Harry, Wyatt, Walter, Ken Jr.), Henry John & Maytesha (Noah, Haveah, Hariah, Neil Bert & Tanya (Dylan, Jayden, Damien, Khloe), Carlina Rosita & Soledad Blandina) Henry Jr., Luisiann & Michael (Michelle (Logan, Francisco Jr.), Melaine, Michael II, Mathew, Mark, Miranda, Mariah, Maya) Ramon Anthony & Nita (Nitasha, Rayann, Ryan, Regina), †Ray Anthony, †Joseph, †Elpedia, †John

Carmen DLC. & Don A. Farrell

Children: Shari Farrel (Jude) Richard & Celina Farrell (Tiona & Rian, Anthony & Wendy, Richeena, Rikkie, & Richard Jr.), Darcy & Jackie (Jade & Isa)

Ramon M. & Dolores T. Dela Cruz

Children: Peter John, Valerie & Robert Jr. (Raina Roberta & Jeremiah, Robin Rae, Robert John II & Raiden Judd) Raymond Jr. & Mary Ann (Joe Raymond, Emiliana Dolores (Quiana Elani) Marc Anthony, Lou Kani, Sir Lashu, Anissa, Cody & Colin), Peter & Elaine (Pia Elaine, Peter II, Prestin, Peter, Pevika), Sheila & Henry Jr. (Hilary Rosario, Stephanie Frances, Henry Ray & Stefan Fritz), Marian & Alfonso Jr. (Ha'Ani, Dia Noah, Aiysha & Journey), Eugene & Jhen (Quinn), Mathew & Mary (Melton (Celeste Kaylani), Ezra & Katie Rosario), Eva & Anthony

Francisco M. Dela Cruz & Anita N. Antoigue

Children: Laura Lynn & Richard (Ryan Raymond & Rachel (4 kids), Brandon Jacob, Steven Jr., Stoni Amber, Eva Conner, Taylor Jessie, †April Wyne, Ko'Ani Mandy, & Tori Paige), Francisco Jr. (Kaisha Angeline, Francisco Jr., Jean Clyde, Linley Luke, Marley Manuel & Kai'ani Joanita), Manel Joseph & Laila (Irenia Maria, Anica Frances, Manel Joseph, Jesus Francisco, Aila Dina, Aniko Estella, Cassidy irene), Luke Vincent (Aniscia, Latisha, Frank Thomas & Ronnie Anthony) Antonette Agnes (Anton Christian) Jesse Moses & Morah (Moika Elani, Nevaeh, Zackery Frank, Jestin Francis) Doris Ann & Mike (Joey Franklin, Aubree Jo & Mika Vianit)

Cynthia DLC. & Marciano Takasi

Children: Brigitte & Mario (Alana Mareese, Mario Moises, Cindy Florene), Marciano & Claudia (Anthony Jermaine), Teruko & Christopher (Marciano Esteven, Thia Liana, Marissa, Christopher Jr.), Jessica & Edwin (Newton, Alexa, Thalia, Orion, Donny Ciaun, Daniel John, Calix Manuel)

Vicente M. & Carmelita Q. Dela Cruz

Children: Daniel Edward & Dedra (Darien, Damien, Dillen), †Lucrecia (Joseph Raymond, Ali I kai Joseph) Carla Marie & Joaquin (Manuel Vincent, Malinao Tasi, Augustine Tudela, John Christian, Hanae Darence & Latrisha Ina), Lawrence & Rita (Shimiko & Skyler), Victoria Marie & Gregory (Raymond Jermaine)

Jose M. & Enriqueta S. Dela Cruz

Children: Marjorie & Richard (Kayori & Oen) Joanna & James, Soledad & Mario

Edward M. Dela Cruz & Ines S. Sandbergen

Children: Kevin Michael & Francine (Elizabeth Ann, Kian Mekel), Jason Jesus (Donovan, Darren), Edilena & Kelvin (Keanee Beatrice & Eizaiah Joaquin), Edward II, Reggae, Benny Jr., Zoe Zinnia, Baltazar, Nicole

Lucia M. Dela Cruz / Therese F. Acosta-Leane Anne

He will also be missed by his numerous Aunts, Uncles, God-Children and Cousins.

Nightly rosary is being prayed at San Jose Church, Tinian at 8:00pm.

Funeral Services will be held on Wednesday, February 29, 2012. His remains will be taken from Tinian Health Center at 8:00am to San Jose Church, Tinian. Responso Service will be at 8:15am followed by Holy Rosary at 8:30am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am followed by Interment Service at Tinian Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers,
 Thank you and Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

The Family

"Death leaves a heartache no one can heal. Love leaves a memory that no one can steal."

Life & Style

By **SANDY COHEN**
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

Oscar turns up the star power for final rehearsal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Academy Awards are a big deal—even to A-listers. That's why a parade of stars came through the theater at the Hollywood & Highland Center Saturday to run through their lines and prepare to address their peers in front of a world-wide audience of millions.

MUPPET REHEARSAL

Even celebrities of the felt variety took time to practice their lines. Though Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy have been famous for decades, they still rehearsed like the dedicated pros they are.

The two Muppets and their invisible operators delighted the crew of show workers with their playful banter and puppet antics. Film academy president Tom Sherak was so taken with the two that he sat nearby throughout their rehearsal.

"Hey Don, it's been too long," Kermit said to the show's producer-director, Don Mischer.

"I'm going to try to get up there and see you," Mischer replied over the theater loudspeaker.

"I have no idea how to get down there," huffed Miss Piggy.

After their rehearsal, the two formally dressed stars were placed on special stands, shrouded in black cloth and carried away.

BACKSTAGE MEETING

Oscar host Billy Crystal, who has declined to speak with reporters and kept his rehearsals closed throughout the week, emerged from his dressing room to observe the proceedings Saturday. Wearing jeans, sneakers and a newsboy cap, the comedian blended in with the rest of the backstage workers—so much so that he had to re-introduce himself to an admired colleague.

"Hi James, Billy Crystal," he said to James Earl Jones, who received a Governors Award late last year and will be honored again at Sunday's ceremony.

As soon as the actor recognized Crystal, he hugged him.

"With that cap on, I thought you were a hoodlum," Jones said before wishing the comedian well on his ninth



A stagehand cleans the floor during rehearsals for 84th Academy Awards Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012 in Los Angeles.

AP

Oscar-hosting stint.

"Have fun tonight," Jones said, "and tomorrow night."

A BLAST OF "BRIDESMAIDS"

The cast of "Bridesmaids" reunited on the Oscar stage and dosed the theater with a blast of energy.

"Oh my God, I cannot believe I'm there!" Rose Byrne said when she spotted her seat near the front of the theater.

"I see you!" Maya Rudolph said to Kristin Wiig, pointing out her seat-saving placard.

As the actresses prepared to make their entrance alongside co-stars Melissa McCarthy, Ellie Kemper and Wendi McLendon-Covey, they threw up jazz hands and pretended to disco dance. McLendon-Covey also played an oversized air guitar.

Once they emerged and hit their marks,

McLendon-Covey pointed her toe and lifted her skirt to overtly flash some leg, cracking up the audience of show workers. (The rest of the women wore pants—and all rocked in towering heels.)

When Wiig missed one of her lines, she confessed, "I'm so glad we're doing this rehearsal!"

FUNNY WOMEN

Emma Stone ran into the "Bridesmaids" cast as she stepped into the wings, stage right.

Oscar producer Brian Grazer introduced her to the rest of the ladies.

"I hear about you all the time!" Stone gushed to Melissa McCarthy, who is nominated for her supporting role in the film.

"The Help" star then turned to Maya Rudolph and told her, "You on 'Satur-

day Night Live' was so amazing!"

Stone offered a round of hugs, but Kristin Wiig stayed back.

"I have a cold, so I can't get in there," said Wiig, a nominee for the "Bridesmaids" screenplay.

"So we can't make out right now?" Stone replied.

When she noticed the women's statuesque stilettos, Stone asked: "Wait, were we supposed to bring shoes?"

Still, she stepped on stage in her flats and soared through her rehearsal.

PHOTO OPP

Even veteran producer and multiple Oscar winner Brian Grazer was excited about seeing stars: The Academy Awards producer posed with nearly every celebrity who came to rehearsals.

"Can I take a picture with you guys?"

For my obituary?" the 61-year-old said to presenters Tina Fey and Bradley Cooper, who happily obliged.

"I want one picture," Grazer declared to Sandra Bullock, who said, "We just did one!" Still, she smiled for another photo.

Chris Rock posed for multiple pictures with the producer and his sons, both on stage and in the green room.

"When I came to town, Grazer was running things," Rock said. "Thirty years later, nothing's changed."

Christian Bale came to the theater carrying his young daughter, who was wearing a wizard costume. He handed her off to his wife to pose with Grazer.

Colin Firth and Tom Hanks also took pictures with the producer.

"You can take as many as you like," Firth said.

FAKE OSCARS, REAL PRESENTER

Tom Hanks wore jeans, boots and his always-affable smile at his morning rehearsal. The two-time Oscar winner and Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences governor posed for photos with the show's producers before practicing his presentation.

"Brian Grazer, can you believe it?" Hanks said as he embraced the producer. "You saved the day!"

Grazer stepped in as co-producer with Don Mischer in November after Brett Ratner—who had been tapped to co-produce with Mischer—resigned following his public use of a gay slur.

Hanks greeted the camera operators and stage managers who've worked the Oscar show for years before presenting his category.

After opening the prop envelope, the actor said, "The fake rehearsal Oscar goes to..."

EASY IRON

"The Iron Lady" wears jeans and a ponytail?

Meryl Streep, up for her 17th Academy Award, this time for playing Margaret Thatcher, kept things casual Saturday for her rehearsal, arriving in jeans, flats and a black sweater. Of course, she'll be supremely glammed up on Sunday: Streep's publicist joked that the best-actress nominee plans to wear "17-inch heels."

Sandler sets Razzie record: 11 worst-movie noms

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—When Adam Sandler's bad, he's really bad, according to voters for the Razzies, an Academy Awards spoof that singles out the worst movies of the year.

Sandler received a record 11 nominations Saturday for the Razzies as star, producer or writer on three 2011 movies—"Jack and Jill," "Just Go with It" and "Bucky Larson: Born to Be a Star."

That more than doubled the previous record of five Razzie nominations held by Eddie Murphy for 2007's "Norbit."

Sandler's nominations include worst actor for both "Jack and Jill" and "Just Go with It"—and worst actress for "Jack and Jill," in which he plays a family man and his own twin sister.

Sandler also had two nomi-

nations as worst screen couple opposite Jennifer Aniston or Brooklyn Decker in "Just Go with It" and opposite Katie Holmes, Al Pacino or himself in "Jack and Jill."

As a producer, Sandler was credited with worst-picture and worst prequel, remake, rip-off or sequel nominations for both "Bucky Larson" and "Jack and Jill." He also shared in worst-screenplay nominations as a writer on both movies, and a worst-ensemble nomination for "Jack and Jill."

"It's almost karmic for someone to have made that much razz-able stuff in one year," said Razzies founder John Wilson. "He has angered someone really powerful, I would say."

Along with "Bucky Larson" and "Jack and Jill," worst-picture contenders are "New Year's

Eve," "Transformers: Dark of the Moon" and "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1."

"Jack and Jill" led with 12 nominations, with "Transformers" second with nine and "Breaking Dawn" right behind with eight.

Razzie nominations were released on the eve of the Oscars. Winners will be announced on April Fool's Day.

For worst actor, Sandler is up against "Bucky Larson" star Nick Swardson, along with Russell Brand for "Arthur"; Nicolas Cage for "Drive Angry," "Season of the Witch" and "Trespass"; and Taylor Lautner for "Abduction" and "Breaking Dawn."

Swardson also was nominated for worst supporting actor for "Jack and Jill" and "Just Go with It."



In this image released by Sony Pictures, Adam Sandler portrays both Jill, left, and Jack in a scene from "Jack & Jill."

AP

For worst actress, Sandler is joined by another cross-dressing actor, Martin Lawrence in "Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son." Also nominated were Sarah Palin for her documentary "The Undeclared"; Sarah Jessica Parker for "I Don't Know

How She Does It" and "New Year's Eve"; and Kristen Stewart for "Breaking Dawn."

Several Oscar winners made the Razzies list, among them Cage (a best-actor winner for "Leaving Las Vegas") and Pacino (a best-actor winner for

"Scent of a Woman"), who was nominated for worst supporting actor for "Jack and Jill."

Bill Condon, an Oscar winner for his "Gods and Monsters" screenplay, was among the worst-director nominees at the Razzies for "Breaking Dawn."

The group traditionally has announced its nominees the day before the Oscar nominations and its winners the night before the Oscars. But Wilson and the roughly 600 voting members for the Razzies decided to experiment with an April 1 date this time, figuring April Fool's Day was an ideal time for their mock ceremony.

"I have always wondered if we stepped slightly away from lockstep with the Oscars, what would happen," Wilson said. "We just kept hoping the Oscars would do their ceremony on April 2, but they just never did."

'Artist' wins best-picture at indie Spirit Awards

BY DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—"The Artist" won best picture and three other prizes Saturday at the Spirit Awards honoring independent film, a possible prelude to a big night at the Academy Awards for the black-and-white silent movie.

The film also won for best director for Michel Hazanavicius and lead actor for Jean Dujardin as a silent-era star whose career crumbles as talking pictures take over in the 1920s. It earned the cinematography prize for Guillaume Schiffman, too.

"The Artist" is the best-picture favorite at Sunday's Oscars.

Michelle Williams won best actress as Marilyn Monroe in the filmmaking tale "My Week with Marilyn."

Supporting-acting honors went to Christopher Plummer as an elderly widower who comes out as gay in "Beginners" and Shailene Woodley as a troublesome Hawaiian teenager in "The Descendants."

"The Artist" producer Thomas Langmann said the awards attention for the film was especially gratifying given how difficult it was to line up financing for a silent film, a form that went out of

vogue more than 80 years ago.

"Everybody told us this is so much against conventional wisdom," Langmann said.

At Sunday's Oscars, Dujardin is in a two-man race for best actor against "The Descendants" star George Clooney. Williams is nominated for best actress at the Oscars, though Viola Davis of "The Help" and Meryl Streep of "The Iron Lady" are considered the favorites.

Williams gave the best performance among the Spirit Awards winners with a touching acceptance speech acknowledging her kinship with low-budget independent filmmakers and recalling her first time at the ceremony a decade ago.

"I wore my own clothes back then, which were not very good, and I cut my own hair, which also was not very good," Williams said. "I still remember the feeling that in this room, unlike others, that that was OK. Possibly even preferred. And what I thought then and I still feel now is that it's because this room was a room full of misfits, outcasts, loners, dreamers, mumbler, delinquents, dropouts. Just like me."

Plummer is the supporting-actor favorite at the Oscars, at 82 potentially becoming the



AP

Michel Hazanavicius poses backstage with the award for best director for "The Artist" at the Independent Spirit Awards on Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012, in Santa Monica, Calif.

oldest actor ever.

"It's taken me the longest time to realize the Spirit Awards have nothing to do with booze," Plummer joked, going on to thank all the spirits that have come his way in his career, "good and evil."

Woodley was not nominated for an Oscar but won out over a lineup that included Academy Award nominee Janet McTeer of the Irish drama "Albert Nobbs."

"The Descendants" also won the screenplay award for director Alexander Payne and his co-

writers, Nat Faxon and Jim Rash.

Dujardin was unable to attend the Spirit Awards. He was traveling back to Los Angeles for Sunday's Oscars after the Cesar awards in France on Friday, where "The Artist" won six prizes, including best picture and director for Hazanavicius.

Writer-director Hazanavicius made a rushed trip from France to Los Angeles for the Spirit Awards, joking backstage that the "police escort to come from the airport, that was great."

Other winners:

■ First feature: "Margin Call," directed by J.C. Chandor.

■ International film, "A Separation," directed by Asghar Farhadi.

■ Documentary: "The Interrupters."

■ First screenplay: Will Reiser, "50/50."

■ John Cassavetes Award for feature film made for less than \$500,000: "Pariah."

An informal celebration compared to Hollywood's many black-tie honors, the Spirit Awards were presented in their usual venue in a tent along the beach in Santa Monica, just west of Los Angeles.

Hosted by Seth Rogen, the ceremony was taped to air later Saturday on IFC.

Crystal to the rescue for 84th Academy Awards show

By LYNN ELBER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Oscar ceremony has much to prove Sunday, including whether a blockbuster-free field can draw a TV audience and if Billy Crystal's host routine remains a crowd-pleaser.

Brian Grazer and Don Mischer, the show's producers, are laughing off the challenges: "Comedy is the direction we're going in this year," said Mischer.

For Crystal, who returns to the ceremony (8:30 p.m. EST, ABC) after an absence of eight years, that means jokes and patter that were being rehearsed at the last minute to avoid punch line leaks.

The actor also is bringing back two of his trademark

Oscar bits: A film sequence in which he appears via CGI in clips from the nine best-picture contenders, and a musical number that pays tribute to the ceremony and nominees.

"It's everything everybody is going to want to see from Billy Crystal," Grazer said. "Billy was born for this job. He loves being the host and he does it with complete zest and enthusiasm. He makes it fun for everybody."

Crystal has help. Presenting team Will Ferrell and Zach Galifianakis have a "great gag," Grazer promised, with more light moments planned courtesy of co-presenters Tina Fey and Bradley Cooper and,

in a group effort, the cast of "Bridesmaids."

There's a chance for controversy in a presidential election year and, with Sacha Baron Cohen invited, for mock political friction. Rumor has it Cohen will come dressed as the character from "The Dictator," his upcoming movie about a faux country's despot.

Although there were hints of motion picture academy uneasiness about the possible stunt, "we're thrilled to have him," Grazer said.

Among the high-wattage presenters for the 84th Academy Awards at the Hollywood & Highland Center (formerly the Kodak Theatre) are Halle Berry, Tom Cruise, Natalie Port-

man, Michael Douglas, Penelope Cruz and Angelina Jolie. They'll be framed by a stage set evoking a classic movie theater and the evening's theme: the enduring nature of the moviegoing experience.

Nominees in the lead acting categories include Viola Davis for "The Help," Meryl Streep for "The Iron Lady," George Clooney for "The Descendants" and Jean Dujardin for "The Artist."

But the night's starring role goes to Crystal, 63, who acknowledged in a Oscar.com video that "there's so much expected" of his return. He should have the audience's goodwill in his ninth Oscar gig since, in the best Hollywood tradition, he came to the rescue after Eddie Murphy dropped out as host.



Crystal

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Taylor Swift asks NJ teen to country music awards

SOMERDALE, N.J. (AP)—Taylor Swift has a date for the Academy of Country Music awards. The country star asked a fan, Kevin McGuire of Somerdale, N.J., to the awards show. McGuire is 18 and has leukemia. His sister had started a campaign on Facebook to get Swift to go with him to his prom. Swift writes in a Facebook post of her own that she can't make it to the prom, but that she'd like for McGuire to accompany her to the awards ceremony April 1 in Las Vegas. She is nominated for three awards. A spokesman for Swift confirms that she wrote the post. A post on the Facebook page for McGuire thanks her for the invitation.

Celine Dion cancels Vegas shows due to virus

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Singer Celine Dion has canceled several upcoming concerts in Las Vegas because of a virus. Caesars Palace officials say her doctor advised her to rest for a week to recover from the virus, which caused an inflammation of her vocal cords. Shows scheduled for Friday, Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday were canceled at the resort's Colosseum. Her next scheduled concert there is

March 3. Dion, in a statement, said she doesn't "like to let people down," and she feels terrible about not being able to perform at the shows. Refunds will be given to people who bought tickets. Caesars spent \$95 million to build the Colosseum for Dion in 2003, complete with a humidifier to protect her voice

Academy unhappy but helpless to stop Oscar auction

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—he Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is not pleased with plans to auction off 15 Oscar statuettes from such films as "Citizen Kane," "Wuthering Heights" and "Little Women." But the academy says its hands are tied in blocking the Tuesday sale by Nate D. Sanders Auctions because the statuettes were awarded prior to 1950, when a "winners agreement" was instituted banning the sale of Oscars. "Oscars should be won, not purchased," the academy said in a statement, adding that it had no "legal means of stopping the commoditization of these particular statuettes." The Sanders Co. expects its total Oscar inventory, which includes Herman Mankiewicz's 1941 screenplay award for "Citizen Kane," to command more than \$1 million.

Controlling pet population should be as easy as pie

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: I'm a longtime reader with a question I have never seen in your column: Why don't they put something in pet food to keep dogs and cats from getting pregnant? Then people could control the pet population and it would stop the killing.
HARRISONBURG, VA., READER

Dear Abby

DEAR READER: Your idea is intriguing. However, the reason

that contraceptive pet food doesn't exist may have something to do with the cost. Also, the effective dose might vary according to the size and weight of the animals. If a Great Dane wasn't feeling particularly hungry one day, it could wind up a "little" bit pregnant. (Conversely, a Chihuahua with a large appetite could end up sterile for life.)

Seriously, I took your question to Dr. John Winters, a respected veterinarian in Beverly Hills, Calif., who told me there are research trials going on involving oral contraceptives to control the wild animal population, such as coyotes. If one day it is made available for domestic pets, it would have to be by prescription only and dispensed by a veterinarian to ensure the dosage is correct.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Les," enjoys cooking and inviting friends to join us for dinner. I respect people's likes and dislikes when it comes to certain foods, but Les does not. We have discussed it on many occasions and he feels people should be "open-minded, not picky or finicky." We are having two guests over for dinner soon. One does not like onions and the other doesn't care for mushrooms. I reminded Les of this, but he's determined to prepare his spaghetti sauce with lots of onions and mushrooms. This upsets me. As the hostess, I'm embarrassed. Am I wrong to feel this way?

JUST THE SOUS-CHEF, DES MOINES, IOWA

DEAR JUST THE SOUS-CHEF: That your husband would deliberately serve guests something he knows they dislike shows him to be self-centered and unwilling to extend true hospitality. I don't blame you for feeling embarrassed.

Don't be surprised if your guests eat very little of Les' spaghetti, and prepare for it in advance by having a LARGE salad and garlic bread on hand so they won't go away hungry. In time, your problem may resolve itself, because a person would have to be a glutton for punishment to accept a second dinner invitation at your home.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been married 35 years. The children are grown and on their own now. I am healthy, but find I have absolutely no interest in my spouse—sexual or otherwise. Habits of his that I overlooked in earlier years really turn me off now.

Don't say "get counseling." I don't want to become close or intimate with him again. I'm not the type to cheat, so I guess I'll just be thankful for the good years I had with my young children.

I have chosen to stay in this marriage so my children and grandchildren won't have to split time visiting. After so many years, staying is just easier. Has anyone ever written to you with a similar situation?

UNFULFILLED IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR UNFULFILLED: Yes, usually after the crisis that happened because the woman's husband felt abandoned and looked elsewhere for the caring and affection he wasn't receiving at home.

The relationship you have described isn't a marriage; it's an "arrangement." If this is what you and your husband are willing to settle for in order to spare your children and grandchildren the inconvenience of visiting you separately, then you both have my sympathy.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

CLASSIFIED ADS



FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

2 Bedroom Apartment for Rent. For \$200.00 / month. Koblerville, please call 288-0728.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

WHATZIT Solution: The other side of the tracks

CLICK IT OR TICKET DAY & NIGHT

**LOOKING TO BUY
TOYOTA TACOMA 4X4 TRUCK
1999 OR 2000 MODELS.
CALL 671-686-8669**

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$39
• 3-Liner with picture	\$24	\$42
• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Karen Ann Alla and Emmanuel Manuel
PMB 126 P.O. Box 10001
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: 670-285-7109

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of:	FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 12-0031
MATTHEW ROY ALLA CORDOVEZ Minor Child	NOTICE OF HEARING
By:	
Karen Ann All and Emmanuel Manuel Petitioners.	

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 1, 2012, at 9:30am in Courtroom 217A, before Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja.

Dated this 31st day of January, 2012.

BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 02-0408
-v-	
ANGELINA A. MANGLONA, Defendant.	THIRD AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on June 25, 2010, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot 345 R-404, situated in Rota, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 929 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 345 R 09 dated September 21, 1984, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 84-2049.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 16, 2012, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at the Superior Court, Sinapalo Village, Rota, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 7th day of February, 2012:

/s/MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

THE FISG **The Financial & Insurance Services Group, Inc.**

REPOSSESSED VEHICLE FOR SALE

AS IS CONDITION: NO WARRANTIES EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED

YEAR:	MAKE:	MODEL:	LIC NO:
2002	TOYOTA	HIGHLANDER	ABW 930
2007	YAMAHA	XVS 650 MOTORCYCLE	MAB 388

The Financial & Insurance Services Group, Inc. (FISG) is now accepting sealed bid on the above mention vehicle & motorcycle at the main office located in the Cabrera Center on Beach Road Garapan, Saipan.

FISG reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. Vehicle is sold AS IS with no Warranties, Expressed or Implied.

Deadline for bidding is on March 09, 2012.

For more information, contact Diego Masga, collection Department at 234-5706 / 8615.

Stephen Austin
Litulumar Limes
P.O. Box 503329
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: 670-233-3628

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of:	FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 12-0072
STEPHEN AUSTIN LITULUMAR LIMES, Petitioner.	NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 8, 2012 at 9:30am in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Perry B. Inos.

Dated this 3rd day of February, 2012.

BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Subscribe to the CNMI's
First Daily Newspaper
Call 235-NEWS

WHATZIT?
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

TRACK TRACK

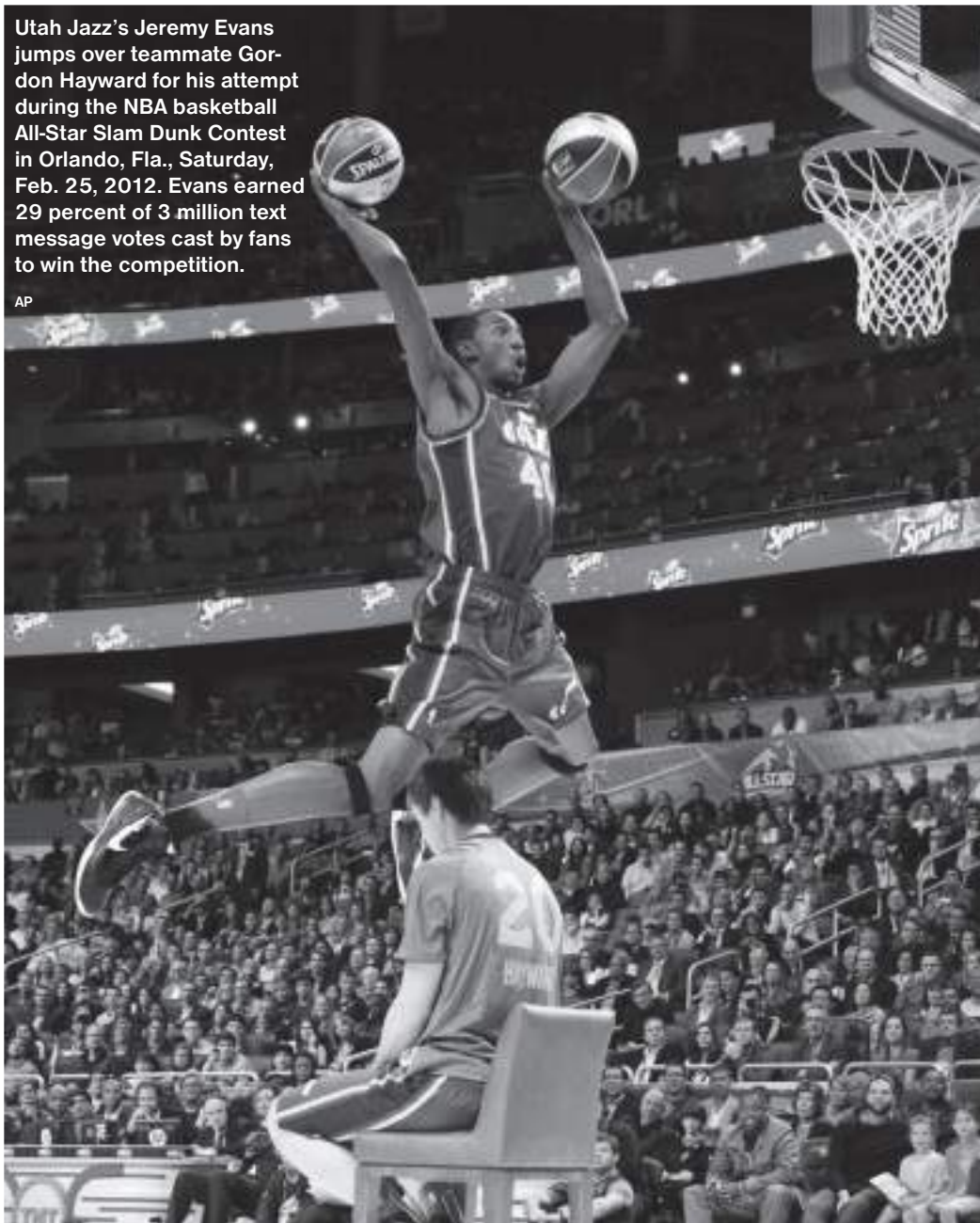
www.facebook.com/dingbatgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Utah's Jeremy Evans wins Slam Dunk Contest

Utah Jazz's Jeremy Evans jumps over teammate Gordon Hayward for his attempt during the NBA basketball All-Star Slam Dunk Contest in Orlando, Fla., Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012. Evans earned 29 percent of 3 million text message votes cast by fans to win the competition.

AP



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—His nickname is the Human Pogo Stick and Utah's Jeremy Evans set out to put some bounce back into the Slam Dunk Contest.

Evans endeared himself to the fans with a mix of props and creativity, and they voted him the winner of one of the marquee events of the NBA's All-Star Saturday festivities.

Evans, who got into the competition as a replacement for injured New York guard Iman Shumpert, earned 29 percent of the 3 million votes cast by fans. He beat out Houston's Chase Budinger, Indiana's Paul George and Minnesota's Derrick Williams for the Jazz's first-ever trophy in the contest.

In a departure from past dunk competitions, fans were given complete voting power and cast their ballots by text message after each of the four participants competed in three one-dunk rounds.

Evans dunked with a camera on his head, slammed two basketballs while jumping over a seated assistant and donned a Karl Malone jersey while dunking over mailman-dressed comedian Kevin Hart.

Budinger got just as many cheers from the Amway Center fans as Evans, and some in the celebrity-filled crowd sighed when the winner was announced.

Budinger got his loudest cheer when he donned a Cedric Ceballos jersey and imitated his 1992

blindfolded dunk, completing it with a reverse slam.

Kevin Love knows something about dunking. He does most of his dirty work inside for the Minnesota Timberwolves, but he got to show off his outside touch on Saturday night.

Love beat out Oklahoma City star Kevin Durant to win the 3-Point Shootout.

The former UCLA star was consistent throughout, but had to survive a tiebreaker in the first round and sweat out the last few shots from Durant to pull out the 17-14 victory in the final.

Love is in the middle for a breakout year for Minnesota, averaging 25 points and 9.9 rebounds a game. But he also has connected on 49 of 141 3-point attempts for the Timberwolves.

Celebrities lined the court for the appetizer before Sunday's NBA All-Star game, and the first event saw the continuation of the good vibes that New York Knicks sensation Jeremy Lin has brought to the Big Apple recently.

With Knicks super fan Spike Lee looking on, Team New York had the touch from the outside and won the Shooting Stars event. Former Knicks star Allan Houston nailed his third attempt at a half-court shot to give his team consisting of current Knicks guard Landry Fields and Cappie Pondexter of the WNBA's New York Liberty the victory.

San Antonio point guard Tony Parker then won the Skills Competition. Parker was the only one of six participants to

break 30 seconds in the first round (29.2) and this time of 32.8 in the final run on the obstacle course was better than

Boston's Rajon Rondo (34.6) and New Jersey's Deron Williams (41.4).

Love was tied for third after the opening round of the Shootout and beat Miami's Mario Chalmers 5-4 in a tiebreaker. Defending champion James Jones led all shooters in the opening round with 22 and Durant was next with 20.

Orlando's Ryan Anderson just missed eliminating both Love and Chalmers, totaling 17 after missing his final 2-point

money ball.

Love and Durant both had 16 in Round 2 to advance to the finals, with Jones posting 12.

Houston, Fields and Pondexter completed the shooting course in 37.3 seconds in the final round. It was better than the 47.6 posted by the Team Texas trio of former Houston Rockets star and TNT analyst Kenny Smith, current Rocket Chandler Parsons and Sophia Young of the San Antonio Silver Stars.

Team Orlando and Atlanta

posted the slowest times of Round 1 and were eliminated.

The speedy Parker put together an impressive display on the skills obstacle course, which involves participants moving through a dribbling circuit, successfully throwing chest passes through a hanging tire and driving for a layup.

Williams, the 2008 winner, holds the record for the skills' course at 25 seconds, but had trouble completing a pass in the final round on Saturday.

Stern: Silver worthy successor as NBA commissioner

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — David Stern will reveal only two things about his future as NBA commissioner.

He'll be retired within five years, and he hopes Adam Silver replaces him.

Stern endorsed Silver for the job on Saturday, calling the deputy commissioner and 20-year employee of the NBA a "first-rate, top of the class executive."

"I guess I would say that one of the things that a good CEO does, and I try to be a good CEO, is provide his board with a spectacular choice for its successor, and I think I've done that, and that's Adam," Stern said, with Silver sitting at a table to his right.

"That's ultimately, if I had the decision, if I were doing it myself, he would be the commissioner."

However, Stern said the choice would be left to the owners, and he's given them no indication

when they will have to make it.

Stern committed to a minimum of five more years on the job after the previous collective bargaining agreement was ratified in 2005. He said he's told them nothing now, though he said the discussion would come "very soon." He repeated what he's said previously about not being around to handle the next round of negotiations, which could be in 2017 if either side exercises its right to opt out of the 10-year deal.

"I'm not going to be here when it either is or isn't reopened in six years," he said.

Silver was already the lead negotiator during the recent labor talks, leading owners through a five-month lockout to a new deal in which they saved about \$280 million a year in player salary costs.

Stern has leaned on his longtime assistant and the former president of NBA Entertain-

ment more frequently in recent years, often leaving it to him to answer difficult questions. He passed the microphone to Silver on a couple of occasions Saturday for questions about the league's future that Stern, 69, may not be around to answer.

He has plenty of business to complete now.

He will meet Sunday with leadership from Sacramento and the Maloof family, who own the Kings, as the sides try to beat a March 1 deadline to complete a plan to finance a new arena the city needs to keep the team.

"We'd like the city, on behalf of the Maloofs, to make the largest possible contribution," Stern said. "The city would like the Maloofs to make the largest - both have come up with very substantial contributions. It's really getting there. It's just not there yet. And we're looking for ways, imaginative ways, to bridge the gap."

No. 2 Syracuse edges UConn to clinch Big East



STORRS, Conn. (AP)—Syracuse found another way to win Saturday night, and in the process secured the Big East regular-season championship.

Fab Melo's follow-up dunk with 31 seconds left lifted the second-ranked Orange to a 71-69 win over Connecticut. C.J. Fair blocked a shot by Roscoe Smith just before the buzzer to preserve the victory for Syracuse, which has won nine in a row since its only loss of the season Jan. 21 at Notre Dame.

Kris Joseph had 21 points to lead the Orange (29-1, 16-1 Big East). Jeremy Lamb had 19 points, and Andre Drummond added 17 points and 14 rebounds for UConn (17-11, 7-9), which overcame a 17-point second-half deficit to tie the game with 47 seconds to go.

"This was a big character win, because we didn't have the momentum for the last 5 minutes and everything was going right for them," said Fair. "For us to come up with a win like this is big."

The win was the first for Syracuse at Gampel Pavilion, where the Orange had been 0-4. Scoop Jardine made a layup

with 9:55 left to give Syracuse a 60-49 lead, but Connecticut responded with a 14-3 run to tie it at 63 with 4:18 to go. Ryan Boatright started the spurt with a layup and Drummond finished it with a rebound basket and a fast-break layup.

The Orange led 69-65 with 2:12 remaining when Drummond got free for a dunk and then tipped in Boatright's miss to leave it tied again with 47 seconds left.

"We should have won that game," Drummond said. "We had a couple of tough plays down the stretch and they made their shots. At the end of the game, we didn't get the foul call that we were looking for."

Syracuse led 46-29 early in the second half after a 3-pointer by Joseph, but UConn began chipping away. A 3-point shot from Boatright cut that to single digits, and a behind-the-back pass from Shabazz Napier led to Lamb led to a three-point play with 11:53 left that cut the deficit to 56-49.

Drummond followed Smith's miss with a layup that cut the lead to 63-61 and then took a pass from Napier from beyond halfcourt and tied the game with just more than 4 minutes left.

Melo's dunk off a miss by Fair gave Syracuse the win-

ning margin despite protests from UConn's bench that Melo touched the ball while it was in the cylinder.

"The referees let us decide it, they let us play, they didn't call no touch fouls and it's just great to play in this conference," Joseph said.

Syracuse took control of the first half early. Joseph, who had 12 points before the break, went on his own 7-0 run to give Syracuse a 12-6 lead. The Orange extended that to 25-10 after a 13-0 run that was keyed when James Southerland blocked a flying dunk attempt by Drummond.

The Orange led 43-29 at halftime.

"We need to just improve on when you get a team down, keep 'em down," said Joseph.

The Orange beat the Huskies 85-67 in Syracuse two weeks ago, shooting a season-high 59 percent from the floor. They shot just under 44 percent in this one, and only 34.5 percent in the second half.

Syracuse has won five of the last six meetings between the teams.

Connecticut is 5-5 without coach Jim Calhoun this season, including a 3-4 mark during his current medical leave for spinal stenosis. The Hall of Fame coach

also sat out the team's first three Big East games under an NCAA-imposed suspension stemming from recruiting violations.

Calhoun has surgery scheduled for Monday, but told The Associated Press that he is hoping he can recover enough to return to the bench in time for the season finale against Pittsburgh on March 3. The Huskies had won two of their last three games, but have just five wins since Jan. 1.

The Huskies came into the game rated No. 24 in the RPI and hoping a strong close to the season would be enough to give them an opportunity to defend their national championship in the NCAA tournament. The Huskies travel to Providence on Tuesday.

Boeheim earned his 885th victory, third on the career list and 15 ahead of Calhoun, who is in sixth place.

Former UConn star Rudy Gay had his name added to the "Huskies of Honor" wall before the game. Gay, who now plays for the NBA's Memphis Grizzlies, is the 18th former men's basketball player added to the wall, which pays tribute to the top players, coaches and contributors in UConn men's and women's basketball history.

Chiefs coach indicates interest in Manning



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Team officials and coaches have tried to avoid any discussion about Peyton Manning during this week's annual NFL scouting combine.

Good luck trying that in a town Manning put on the NFL radar and in a venue he helped build.

On Saturday, Kansas City coach Romeo Crennel let it slip that the Chiefs would be interested in pursuing the four-time league MVP - if the Colts let him leave as a free agent.

"I'm not supposed to talk about anybody else's players, and he's still a player with Indianapolis," Crennel said, referring to the league's tampering rules. "But with a talent like that, I would be crazy not to consider it if he were available. I'll leave it at that."

That's as close as anybody has gotten to speculating about Manning's future this week.

Clearly, though, Manning's future is the hot topic in Indy.

Colts general manager Ryan Grigson and coach Chuck Pagano were peppered with questions Thursday about Manning's fate. If Indianapolis does not pay a \$28 million bonus by March 8, the longtime face of the Colts could wind up signing with another team.

There are indications Manning could be on the move after missing the entire 2011 season.

In September, the 35-year-old quarterback had surgery on his neck to repair a damaged nerve that was causing weakness in his throwing arm. It was the third known neck surgery in 19 months, and there have been questions about his arm strength. Indy holds the No. 1 overall pick in April, and team



Indianapolis Colts head coach Chuck Pagano speaks in front of a large photograph of Colts quarterback Peyton Manning during a news conference at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis, Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012.

owner Jim Irsay already has said the Colts will use the pick to select their next franchise quarterback, perhaps making Manning expendable.

The speculation over Manning's health only has been superseded by rumors about potential landing spots for the yet-to-be released quarterback.

"We're looking for a great decision maker. We're looking for a leader. We're looking for an accurate passer. We're looking for a guy that has excellent game management skills, excellent decision maker, a guy that has pocket presence and awareness, the leadership skills," new Miami coach Joe Philbin

said Thursday. "Obviously, the stronger the arm, the more velocity, the better, but we're looking for a guy that can manage a team, lead a team, make good decisions in critical times and make big plays when games are on the line."

Although that sounds like someone with Manning's pedigree, Philbin never mentioned the quarterback by name.

Jets coach Rex Ryan couldn't get away that easily. Some believe New York, where Manning's brother, Eli, already plays for the Giants, would be a perfect spot. The Jets, who have gone to the AFC title game twice in three years, may be just

an upgrade at quarterback away from reaching the Super Bowl.

Ryan tried, creatively, to dodge the question.

"Are you talking about my son (Payton), or some other Peyton?" Ryan said, drawing laughter. "I think first off, Peyton is under contract to a different team, so I can't talk about him specifically. But with our organization, we will look at everybody. There is a list of 10 free agent quarterbacks that I've looked at. There's the draft guys I've looked at. In my opinion, we have the best corner in football, in the history of football, along with Deion Sanders and we are still

looking at a million corners."

Even fans are becoming lobbyists.

In Miami and Nashville, Tenn., there are billboards trying to persuade team officials to sign Manning, but not everyone is listening.

"I understand it from a fan's perspective," Titans general manager Ruston Webster said. "But I'd tell them we like our guys, and you've got to be patient. We've got a good quarterback situation and it's improved a lot since last year."

Where else could Manning go?

Possibly Arizona, where coach Ken Whisenhunt and general manager Rod Graves did nothing this week to dissuade speculation over their interest.

"I think we are happy with what we have (at quarterback), but as Coach Whisenhunt just said, we're about opportunities to get better," Graves said. "This is a competitive game, and we want to get better. If we can, so be it. But right now we believe we have an outstanding group of quarterbacks, and we're preparing to play with that group of quarterbacks."

It's also unclear what the

Colts will do.

The top two quarterbacks in this year's draft, Andrew Luck and Robert Griffin III, both said Friday they would be willing to sit behind Manning in 2012 if that's what Indy chooses to do. And in a Twitter post Saturday, Irsay wrote that he and Manning met in person this week and have been meeting frequently over the past month.

Manning has said he'd be willing to redo the five-year, \$90 million contract he signed in July to make it more palatable for him to stay.

But Grigson and Pagano said they have not seen Manning throw, and there's a strong possibility some of those looking at quarterbacks in Indy could be looking at Manning in two weeks.

"I don't think it has to be a long-term solution (at quarterback). I think you can look at a short-term solution. Obviously, you'd like a long-term solution. Or you can try to get both," Ireland said. "You've got to try to help this team win today and look to the future. It's my job to try to build a team for today and the future. Joe's responsibility is to try to win right now with a mind on the future as well."

Braun back to work with Brewers



PHOENIX (AP)—His 50-game suspension and months of anxiety lifted from his shoulders, Ryan Braun carried only an equipment bag containing his bat and glove.

No speeches or suspicions on this day.

Braun took batting practice, shagged fly balls in the outfield and ran the bases like a little kid, relishing every second in the sun.

Back on the field. Back where he belonged.

"It was a lot of fun," Milwaukee's outfielder said Saturday following the Brewers' first full-squad workout this spring. "I had a lot of fun today, just being around my teammates and being on the baseball field and getting to play baseball was nice. It was a lot of fun."

One day after he vehemently defended his innocence and integrity in the aftermath of his suspension for a positive drug test being overturned by an arbitrator, Braun was finally able to put the turmoil behind him.

It was business as usual. It was baseball - at last.

Following a morning meeting during which manager Ron Roenicke laid out his expectations for the defending NL Central champions, Braun headed out of the clubhouse and was greeted on the sidewalk by a large contingent of Milwaukee fans, who cheered and applauded.

"Atta boy, MVP," yelled one.

"Keep your head up," said another.

Braun smiled and said thanks

as he passed inside metal barricades keeping the fans at a safe distance and walked toward a field adjacent to Maryvale Ballpark to get ready for the 2012 season, one he and the Brewers weren't sure would begin with him in the lineup.

Following the two-hour workout, Braun was mobbed for autographs. With two security guards asking the crowd to give him room, he spent 20 minutes talking with fans and signing as many bats, balls and photos as he could before jogging back inside to more applause.

When he got his locker, a member of Milwaukee's media relations staff informed reporters the 28-year-old would answer a few "questions only about baseball."

Braun said he was touched by the reception.

"It felt incredible and I truly appreciate everybody's support, and it's one of the biggest reasons why I've been able to make it through this challenging situation," he said. "That truly meant a lot to me. It was really cool."

While others may have their doubts whether Braun cheated or believe his claims that "this substance never entered my body at any point," Milwaukee fans have always been in his corner.

"I certainly appreciate people who support me when you deal with adversity," he said. "Like I said yesterday, when you go through something like this you see who truly supports you, you see who your friends are and you see how they truly feel about you. It definitely meant a lot to me."

McIlroy, Westwood to face off in Match Play



MARANA, Ariz. (AP)—A dull day in the desert ended with high anticipation Saturday when Rory McIlroy and Lee Westwood won their matches, setting up a semifinal showdown in the Match Play Championship.

At stake for the winner - a chance to go to No. 1 in the world.

McIlroy had another surge on the back nine to put away Bae Sang-moon of South Korea, 3 and 2. Moments later, Westwood finished off Martin Laird of Scotland for a 3-and-2 victory to advance to the semifinals.

Either of them can replace Luke Donald at No. 1 by winning this World Golf Championship.

"It definitely gives the match an extra bit of spice," McIlroy said.

Hunter Mahan played the shortest quarterfinal match in the 14-year history of the event by beating Matt Kuchar, 6 and

5. His semifinal match will be against Mark Wilson, gaining more respect the deeper he goes in the bracket. Wilson had an easy time in his 4-and-3 win over Peter Hanson of Sweden.

That assures an American will reach the championship match for the first time since Tiger Woods won in 2008.

The semifinal matches will be played Sunday morning, following by the 18-hole championship match in the afternoon.

With a strong breeze, firmer conditions, tough hole locations and only four quarterfinal matches, Saturday at Dove Mountain was lacking excitement. For the first time ever, none of the quarterfinal matches reached the 17th hole.

McIlroy and Westwood saved the day.

For starters, it's the first time the Match Play Championship semifinals have featured two of the top four seeds since 2004, when Woods and Davis Love III advanced. McIlroy is No. 2,

and Westwood is No. 3.

And while they consider themselves friends, there was a testy exchange between them last summer on Twitter, and McIlroy later left the International Sports Management stable.

Westwood already has been No. 1 in the world, and said his priority is picking up his first WGC title. McIlroy already is a major champion, having won at Congressional last summer in the U.S. Open, and would become at 22 the second-youngest player behind Woods to reach No. 1 in the world.

"My priorities were to win major championships and win World Golf Championships because I haven't ever won any," Westwood said. "I've been at No. 1 couple of times. It would be a different way of thinking to me compared to Rory, who hasn't been No. 1. He may be thinking about it, but my main goal is to play well - or play as well as I've been playing - tomorrow morning and try and

win that match."

Getting to this stage has been relatively easy.

McIlroy had to go to the 18th hole in the opening round, but has had little resistance since then. He took the lead for good over Bae with a birdie on the 11th hole, then stretched his advantage when Bae chopped up the 13th hole and missed the par-4 15th green on the wrong side and had to settle for par.

Westwood had a tougher time Saturday, but not for long.

He had led in 48 of the 49 holes he played through the opening three rounds, and fell behind immediately to Laird. But starting with Laird's bogey on the sixth, Westwood won four of the next five holes. He holed a 6-foot birdie putt to halve the 13th hole and stay 2 up, then seized command when Laird took three shots to get out of the bunker on the 14th before conceding.

An All-American semifinal is not nearly as surprising as the players in the match.

Southern sweeps Kagman in MISO caging

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

MISO The Saipan Southern High School Manta Rays outclassed the Kagman High School Ayuyus, 76-56, with a big third-quarter push during their varsity game in the 2012 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Friday.

The Rays were also triumphant in the junior varsity division, beating the Ayuyus in the first game, 41-27.

In the varsity duel, Frank Mettao got things going early for Kagman with his 10 points and the Ayuyus went on to hold a slight edge after the first canto, 18-16.

Then the Manta Rays strengthened their defense in the second quarter and on



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
Saipan Southern High School's Jack Aranda, seen in this file photo making a break toward the basket in their first meeting against Kagman High School, led the Manta Rays to another solid victory over the Ayuyus in last Friday's MISO boys caging at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

offense attacked from afar, making a pair of three-pointers to turn the tables at intermission, 32-29.

In the third quarter, Southern while still playing tough defense also showed its offensive prowess, unloading a 23-point spurt. Jack Aranda and Jimmy Tudela scored seven points apiece in the uprising, putting the Rays in control, 55-43, heading into the fourth and last frame.

The third quarter took a lot out of the Ayuyus and they never postured a comeback in the payoff canto.

With its lead ballooning in the fourth, Southern cleared the bench and got contributions from seven players.

Aranda led two other Rays in double-figures with his 19, while Mettao scrambled for 20 on the short end.

In the junior varsity game,

SSHS built an early 13-8 lead in the opening 10 minutes behind the nine points of Daniel Camacho.

Then Brandon Regis took the wheel in the second quarter with his six points, as the Rays stretched the lead to 18 at half-time, 27-19.

Kagman beefed up on defense, but only managed to trade baskets with Southern in the third quarter. The Rays and Ayuyus grinded out just eight markers apiece in the period, shifting the count to 35-27, heading into the last quarter.

Southern's defense then stepped up in the fourth period, shutting down the hapless Kagman crew. The Ayuyus drew 13 points from Jesse Santos in the first three quarters of the game, however neither him nor anyone else from the Ayuyu side managed a field goal in the final 10 minutes of play. The Ayuyus found access to the hoop on only three occasions.

Camacho paced Southern's win with his 18 points.

The season continues today at 4pm with the Rays getting another crack at the Marianas High School Dolphins, who issued the former their only loss so far in the competition.

JV Game

SSHS 41 – Camacho 18, Ferra 9, Javier 7, Ferrer 3, Palacios 2, Regis 2.

KHS 27 – Je. Santos 13, Jo. Santos 6, Mafnas 6, Recaido 2

Scoring by quarters: 13-8, 27-19, 35-27, 41-27.

Varsity Game

SSHS 76 – Aranda 19, Tudela 15, Mizer 12, De Guzman 8, Salem 7, Alegre 6, Mariano 6, Sablan 3.

KHS 56 – Mettao 20, Lampkins 13, Jones 8, Taitano 4, Butters 3, Foster 2, Reyes 2, Sabulao 2, Santiago 2.

Scoring by quarters: 16-18, 32-29, 55-43, 76-56.

HISTORIC

From Page 28

The Japanese had several opportunities to score, especially in the second period, but they either overshot their mark or Hunsberger was there for the catches and dives.

Noetzel started for the CNMI and made four early saves to frustrate the visitors. On offense, the Commonwealth had its best chance of scoring when Trey Dunn attacked from the wing, but his shot hit the back of the right post.

A few minutes after the first 60 minutes of the game was completed, heavy rains poured, but players resumed action at the muddy field. Eight minutes into the third frame and with the rain starting to stop, Loken broke away from the left side of the penalty box, collided with a defender, and was fouled.

Loken was awarded a penalty kick and converted with the help of teammates Jehn Joyner and Arkie Reusora, who acted as decoys in the perfectly run play. With Loken getting ready for the kick, Reusora crossed to the right and the defense did not follow him. Next, Joyner went to his left and the defense bit to the bait, leaving an open space for Loken's kick and the ball rolled in, turning the cold and quiet night into a perfect pandemonium.

Then in the 74th minute, the trio teamed up anew in giving the CNMI its second goal. The play started with Reusora on the center outside the penalty box and crossing the ball to Joyner, who was at the left corner. Joyner seemed headed to attempt for a goal, but elected to pass the ball to Loken who was in the middle of the box and made a short shot for their 2-0 lead.

The Japanese managed to move within one in the 85th

minute when Nunokawa Kazuki dribbled toward the center near the penalty box and was hounded by four CNMI defenders. With the Commonwealth bets crowding Kazuki, Noetzel struggled to see where the ball was going and it rolled in.

Hunsberger closed out for the CNMI in the fourth frame and drew help from their defenders to foil the Japanese' repeated bids to tie the match. The closest that Japan Soccer College could get in scoring their second goal was when Kazuki again attacked and kick the ball only a few feet away from the left side of the box. Hunsberger was just recovering his position and was not ready for the attack, but Raphael Zapanta made a save when he stepped in and kicked the ball out.

Chelsea FC Soccer School HK's Wai Wo Lee, who coached the CNMI strikers, said the win was a product of team effort.

"Everybody worked hard in this game. Their concentration and communication at the pitch were commendable," Lee said.

"I learned it was the first time the CNMI won an exhibition game and I am glad I was able to help them make history," Lee added.

Lee used all the players in his 20-man roster that also included Ruselle Zapanta, Dale Roberts, Eric Cooke, Brad Ruszala, Steve McKagan, Adam Walsh, Daniel Agulto, Brian Lee, Kenneth Domingo, Dakota Hall, Dan Wollack, Don Cabrera, and Enrico Del Rosario. The CNMI listed 25 players for the exhibition game, but had five missing the match either due to injury or off-island trip.

The CNMI had played several exhibition games against Japan and Guam in the past four years and ended up empty handed before its win over Japan Soccer College.

LADY

From Page 28

ardo, Allodia Lumasag, and Gilda Ogunoro, and sophomores Jeraldine Castillo and Clareth Castro. Maria Ornes and Emily Williams are the Lady Dolphins coaches.

The finale was still scoreless at halftime and remained as such until MHS' Alodia Lumasag unloaded a timely rebound blast into the right side of the net in the 53rd minute of the second frame.

Southern then went on the attack and sent Marielle Gariguez to the frontline where she

mustered a quick answer just two minutes later off of a nifty pass from midfield to knot up the game, 1-1. Gariguez caught the Lady Dolphins' backfield off guard and dribbled through two defenders before beating the goalie with an eye-level strike taken near the outer edge of the goalie box into the left side of the net.

As they did for the majority of the contest, the Lady Dolphins continued their relentless attacks in the red zone, which kept the action too close for comfort for Southern. However, the Lady Rays managed to keep the reigning champions at

bay and force a 10-minute overtime period.

MHS came out aggressive from the start of the bonus time and Lumasag came through in the clutch again with a nice solo shot in the 72nd minute. Then Lizardo added a pair of insurance goals to help nail in the coffin.

Lizardo's first goal came off Melody Johnson's assists at the right wing in the 75th minute. Johnson delivered a well-placed cross spot-on the Lady Rays' doorstep for an easy chip shot by a well-positioned Lizardo. The other goal came moments later at the 78th minute mark

when Lizardo rebounded a deflection off the goalie after another Johnson crafty cross.

Meanwhile, it was double celebration for MHS, as its junior varsity team pulled off an upset over the Kagman High School Lady Ayuyus, 1-0, in the battle for third place.

It was an even battle, but MHS 2 caught a lucky break near the 53rd minute mark when its shot hit a KHS defender and rolled in.

MHS2 went winless during the regular season, but rose to the occasion in the end and finished its developmental season on a high note.

KENTO

From Page 28

Nguyen (19:07.66), Coume Kaga (19:41.76), Karri Fisher (19:49), Paul Viator (20:00), Miku Torres (20:37), R.J. Pierce (20:42.71), and Mamiko Oshima-Berger (20:42.73).

In the 3K race, top finisher Ed Ewing had about a seven-minute lead against Rachel Zuercher, as the former timed in at 36:39 against the latter's 43:53. Rounding out the Top 3 were SSC swimmer Taiga Sato and Dawn Hammermeister, who had identical times of 43:56.67.

Completing the 3K finish-

ers were Lennosuke Susuki (44:30), Suzy Kindel (49:06), Daniel Calvo (53:19), Joshua Berger (53:38), Manny Sitchon (53:43), Paul Plunkett (53:50), Eden Schwartz (55:51), and Jennifer Kogre (1:00:17).

Meanwhile, SSC would like to thank all the swimmers and sponsors for making last Satur-

day's event possible.

"Saipan Swim Club appreciate the support of all sponsors, family, and friends of SSC. Please look forward to the International Meet and Saipan Ocean Swim on April 13 to 15 and the Escape from Managaha Swim on May 5," SSC president Robert Torres said.

RAYS

From Page 28

In other results, the Bank of Saipan Red Sox defeated the Attorney Robert T. Torres Kagman Little Legals (0-2), 12-6, while the Dandan Comets (2-0) overwhelmed McDonald's (0-2), 16-0.

Rays 9, Aces 5

The Rays took an early 2-0 lead in the first inning of two hits and a wild throw. Then the count shifted to 6-4, for the Rays after four innings.

Rays stacked on four more runs in the third inning off two hits, some wild pitches, and an error. However, the Aces struck back with three runs in the bottom half of two walks, two hits and a fielder's choice and then added another run in the bottom of the fourth from Glen Calvo.

The Rays' top of the order answered with a pair of runs and doubled up the Aces, 8-4, off of a couple base ribs by Nathan Torres and Jester Kintaro in the top of the fifth inning. The Aces only managed one run with the bases loaded in the bottom frame and came up empty in the final stand.

The Rays' Manny Esefon gave up three runs off three hits and three walks in three and a third innings. Torres batted 2-for-2 with two runs, while Manuel Celis was 3-for-4 with two runs. The Aces' Kimo Angailen reached on all three appearances and scored twice.

Rays 3, Enforcers 0

The Rays broke the ice for a chipper 1-0 lead in the first inning when Manuel Celis reached off an error and scored later off a wild pitch.

Crafty defense on both sides kept the game competitive, but the Enforcers blinked in the end, allowing the Rays' Luis Blas

and Jester Kintaro to score.

Although the Rays belted five hits in the match they were credited with only one earned run. Nevertheless, Rays' pitcher Nathan Torres pitched a one-hit gem and tallied seven strikeouts with three walks in five shutout innings.

Red Sox 12, Little Legals 5

The Red Sox jumped ahead, 6-0, in the first inning off four hits.

Delin Reusora shut down the Legals, in the first five innings and o gave up only one hit with eight strikeouts.

Then the Sox tacked on six more runs off four hits in the top of the sixth inning and fended off the Legals' last ditch come back attempt.

Red Sox's Tundin Leon Guerrero batted 3-for-4 with an RBI and two runs.

Comets 16, McDonald's 0

The Comets streaked ahead, 12-0, highlighted by a triple and a two-run homer by Aurel Mendiola in the opening frame.

The rest of the Comets' early runs came off a two-RBI single by Erik Cruz, two other hits, three wild pitches, and some extra throws. The Comets added a pair of runs in both the second and third frame before completing the shut out.

Mendiola triggered a number of teammates to flex their muscles as Erik Cruz batted 2-for-3 with three RBIs, two runs and a stolen base; Edmund Cruz was 2-for-2 with a double, a run and a base on balls; and Ethan Babauta was perfect with his 3-for-3 performance at the plate.

Babauta also notched strong win on the mound and gave up just one hit in three efficient innings. He struck out the side in the first and third frame. AJ Sanchez came out in the fourth inning and finished strong for the save.

Weekend Sports

The CNMI's deep pool of youth athletes showcased their talents last week.

In the 2012 Saipan Little League Baseball, players from the Junior, Senior, Big, and Major leagues had their debut games at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios and Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan ballfields. The JPO Enforcersm Comets, IT&E, and Twins went on to win their opening games.

Over at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi, Tsunami Saipan swimmers Kaito and Ryuto Yanai and Miku

Youth athletes put on a show

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tammy made record-breaking swims in their respective age groups.

At the Garapan Basketball Court, the Unified Basketball Association's U15 Islander Youth Basketball Tournament took place with Docomo 2 winning the championship against Docomo 4.

At the Marianas High School

Gymnasium, Grace Christian Academy took the No. 1 spot in the MISO Girls Volleyball League after downing MHS 1 in its last game of the season. The Lady Eagles finished the regular season with an impressive 11-1 record, absorbing its lone loss at the hands of second-ranked Saipan International School.

Still in MISO competition,

the MHS Dolphins improved to a 5-1 record after downing the winless Mt. Carmel (0-8) in the boys varsity caging.

Over at the American Memorial Park tennis courts, champions in the 2012 White Coconut Classic were crowned. Winning their age group divisions were U10's Robbie and Malika Miyawaki, U12's Carol Lee

and Luther Lizama, U15's Carl Dela Cruz and Mikayla Lopez, and U18's Christian Miller and Theecel Minor. In the adults singles, Ken Imaya triumphed in the 40-and-above division, while Jeff Race and Lopez won the men's and women's open categories, respectively.

In Tumon, Guam CNMI youth spikers Charnessa Liza-

ma and Toni Yamada prevailed over six other pairs to rule the women's division of the 2012 Marianas Junior Cup Beach Volleyball Tournament.

Back on Saipan, Marion McKenzie made it two in a row after winning the SBA/Fiji Water February Prince of the Lanes Tournament. In the adults roll-offs, Raphael Zapanta and Diane Camacho won.

In basketball, SCS Heavy Equipment pulled off an overtime win against Smart Cagers to improve to a 3-0 record and take the solo lead in the DLX/Miller Lite caging.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

▲ February roll-off winner Marion McKenzie is flanked by runners-up M.J. Aldan, right, and Ryan Batac.



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

▲ Marianas High School's Erick Dela Rosa goes to work in the paint against Mount Carmel School defenders during their game in the MISO caging at the MHS Gymnasium.



▲ Angelo Jones makes a return from the baseline during a game in the U18 singles division of last week's 2012 White Coconut Classic at the AMP tennis courts.

ROSELYN MONROYO

► SCS' Jack Lizama, center, is trapped at the baseline by Smart Cagers' Marlon De Dios, right, and Joy Dayrit during their game in the DLX/Miller Lite caging last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

▲ The Senior League's Natibu Tanapag Falcons stand as the national anthem is played during the opening of the 2012 Saipan Little League Baseball last week at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

▲ Members of Team Saipan pose for a photo on Gun Beach during NMIVA's 2012 Marianas Junior Cup Beach Volleyball Tournament held in Tumon Bay, Guam. Front row from left, Abigail Hudkins, Kristle Ogbae, Jason Limes, and A.J. Aguilar; Back row from left, Celine Camacho, Josie Santos, Tyce Mister, Toni Yamada, Charnessa Lizama, Clay McCullough-Stearns, Andy Nutting, and John Nekaifes.

Activity Schedule for February 27, 2012

Northern Marianas Badminton Association
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

2012 Tan Holdings Intercompany Basketball League
There are no scheduled events.

2012 Men's B Futsal League
6:00 PM: Froasted Flakes vs. CTSI Puzakals
7:00 PM: Shirley's Coffee Shop vs. News Makers



Utah's Jeremy Evans wins Slam Dunk Contest
PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune Sports



PAGE 27

28 MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2012

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Historic victory for CNMI strikers



The CNMI's Don Cabrera, left, is held by a Japanese Soccer College defender during their exhibition game last Friday night at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI notched its first exhibition game win, slipping past the visiting Japan Soccer College in a rain-soaked match Friday night at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.



Peter Loken made the twin goals for the hosts and the Commonwealth went on to foil the Japanese' bid to equalize with goal keepers Johann Noetzel and Evan Hunsberger holding their ground against the visiting team's strikers.

The CNMI-Japan Soccer College tiff was played in four 30-minute frame and neither team managed to score in the first 60 minutes of play. The visitors had 39 players against only 20 from the host team.

See HISTORIC on Page 26

Kento leads Meek and Mighty winners

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Saipan Swim Club's Kento Akimaru was the youngest participant in the 5-kilometer race of the 7th Annual Meek and

Mighty Ocean Swim and turned out to be the fastest, too.

The 11-year-old Akimaru completed the five laps of last Saturday's race in the waters off Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio in one hour and 38.88 seconds to beat four other swimmers in the longest race of the day.

Akimaru defeated 14-year-old Victoria Chentsova (1:00:57.38) and adult swimmers Jeff El-Hajj (1:02:03.67), Carol Lyn Pierce (1:11:42.01), and Brian Morris (1:15:45.49). Akimaru and Chentsova were together

all throughout the race, but the former was faster in going out of the water, while the latter took her time and was still catching her breath when she headed to the shore.

Besides the 5K event, last Saturday's swim also featured 1K and 3K races.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kento Akimaru runs to the shore during last Saturday's 7th Annual Meek and Mighty Ocean Swim held in the waters off Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

Nicky Nichols was first out of the water in the 1K event, timing in at 14:21, followed by Rinto Takahashi (17:02), while bothers Michail and Michael Villagomez sprinted to the shore and ended up in third and fourth, respectively after clocking in at 17:20 and 17:21.

Other finishers in the shortest race of the day were Akira Kodukora (17:31), Conatsu Kaga (17:58),

Roxie Lamar (18:49), Jon Ulrich (19:06), John Douglas (19:07.63), Quynchi

See KENTO on Page 26

Lady Dolphins clinch fourth straight title

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Marianas High School's varsity team claimed its fourth consecutive championship after outlasting Saipan Southern High School, 4-1, in the finals of the 2012 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Girls Soccer League last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

The champion team is composed of seniors Riezel David, Deveney Dela Cruz, Jem Eugenio, Genevieve Gottwald, Lyvette Lacsina, Jaime Mendoza, Reylynn Sapong, Lea Teodoro, and Liezel Tiples, juniors Krizelle Alforeza, Jeralyn Castillo, Clarisse Cayabab, Farah Chan, Melody Johnson, Charlene Liz-

See LADY on Page 26



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Members of the Marianas High School's varsity team pose for a group photo after beating Saipan Southern High School in the finals of the MISO soccer league, 4-1, last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Rays, Red Sox top Majors foes

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Pacific Amusement-Rep. Ray Yumul's Rays started their campaign in the 2012 season of the Saipan Little League Base-

ball swith a pair of solid wins at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Palacios Ballfield.

The Rays blanked the DPS Dare Program JPO Enforcers, 3-0, last Monday and then trumped the IT&E Ol'Aces yesterday, 9-5.

See RAYS on Page 26



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Bank of Saipan Red Sox's Delin Reusora fires home a pitch against the Attorney Robert Torres Law Offices' Kagman Little Legals during their game in the Majors division last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Palacios Ballfield.

RELATED NEWS

Southern sweeps Kagman in MISO caging
Page 26